

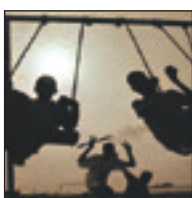
This used to be the world's biggest alarm clock.

Page 16



"We are finally at an age where the media is taking notice of us, our voices are being heard."

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"I just wanted to record my daughter's progress using my camera."

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16th CPC National Congress Closes



Delegates from around the county wave goodbye after the closing session of the 16th CPC National Congress. Xinhua Photo

The week-long 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) ended in Beijing Thursday morning, after the elections of the 16th CPC Central Committee and a new Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI).

The new Central Committee of the CPC, which consists of 198 full members and 158 alternate members, was

elected by delegates to the congress at the closing session yesterday morning

Some 180 of the 356 elected members and alternate members of the Central Committee are new faces, sources said Thursday.

More than 20 percent of the members and alternate members of the new Central Committee are under the age of 50, according to the sources.

A new Central Commission for Discipline Inspection composed of 121 members was also elected at the closing session.

An amendment to the Constitution of the CPC was approved at the closing session, with the important thought of the Three Represents written into the constitution. (Xinhua)

Top Leaders Turn Over Power to Next Generation

Jiang Zemin, the core of the third-generation leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC), and five of his colleagues in the Party's top decision-making body are not on a new central committee of the CPC elected yesterday morning.

His five colleagues are: Li Peng and Zhu Rongji, both 74, Li Ruihuan, 68, Wei Jianxing, 71, and Li Lanqing, 70.

The only member of the 15th CPC Central Committee Political Bureau Standing Committee to enter the 16th CPC central committee is 59-year-old Hu Jintao.

This took place at the closing session of the 16th CPC National Congress held in Beijing on Thursday morning, where the new CPC central committee, comprising 356 members, was elected.

With warm applause, more than 2,100 delegates to the congress showed respect and appreciation to 76-year-old Jiang and his colleagues for the "breadth of their political vision and sterling integrity".

The election began shortly after the

closing session started. As executive members of the Presidium of the 16th CPC National Congress, Jiang and his five colleagues who were not listed as candidates for membership of a new central committee, sat in the front row on the podium.

After ballot distribution and writing, and vote casting and calculation, which took about two hours, the election results were announced. Delegates burst into thunderous applause at the announcement, celebrating the formation of a new CPC Central Committee.

As is customary, a new CPC central committee will hold its first plenary session on the day following the conclusion of a Party national congress. The plenum will elect the CPC central committee general secretary, members of its political bureau and members of its political bureau standing committee for the new term.

According to the CPC Constitution, the political bureau, the standing committee of the political bureau and the

general secretary of the CPC central committee shall be elected at a plenum of the central committee, and the general secretary shall be chosen from among the political bureau standing committee members.

In the past 13 years, the third-generation leadership of the CPC with Jiang at the core, leading Chinese people of all ethnic groups, has made universally acknowledged achievements. The country has seen a period of great prosperity, with a remarkable rise in overall national strength, a marked improvement in people's standard of living and social stability, and a distinctive increase in its international influence.

Observers here say that the smooth generational change of CPC leadership marks the maturing of the world's largest ruling party with a history of 81 years and demonstrates the advancement of political civilization in China. It is bound to have a positive, far-reaching significance for China's long-term prosperity and stability. (Xinhua)

By Xiao Rong

One month down, roughly 340 days to go. Andrew McEwen and Ed Jocelyn, two Englishmen that set out in mid-October from Yudu, Jiangxi Province, to retrace the entire route of the original Long March of the Red Army, are already well on their way in their trek through some of China's most remote country.

On November 8, they emailed *Beijing Today* with the first of a regular series of exclusive columns from the front line.

The message was sent from a small Internet cafe in Hunan province, the third of the eight inland provinces and two autonomous regions that the pair will tromp through on their 6,000-mile, 368-day journey.

On October 16, their first day hiking and the same day the Red Army set out 68 years ago, students on their way to a Yudu primary school massed into an entertaining escort. One of the children was overheard saying, "I wish I had studied English harder, then I could talk to them."

On the second day, they met a very old man who had joined the Red Army in 1934. But unable to break through a Guomindang blockade, he returned home to tend the fields.

Instead of sitting talking to two big noses in an anonymous village, wrote McEwen, that "short marcher" might now be a four-star general, if he had broken through that blockade.

Or long dead, he added.

The duo's plan, through which they hope to learn about China and shed light on an episode in history that has probably not received the credit it is due in the West, has drawn considerable media attention since first reported in *Beijing Today* on July 26.

McEwen and Jocelyn have been amazed by how many people have apparently seen them on TV or in newspapers as they traveled through Jiangxi, Guangdong and now Hunan.

Following the route of the original trek, the march is expected to end in Wuqizhen, Shaanxi province, on October 19, 2003. The two men are less concerned with sticking to the exact schedule of the Red Army, however, as they are about remaining true to the "spirit" of the Long March.

If they succeed as expected, the duo will become the first foreigners to walk the entire path of the Long March since Comintern military advisor Otto Braun did so in 1935.

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: PANG LEI



By Andrew McEwen

Maybe the real March has not yet begun. We have munched on Dove chocolate, supped cups of boiling Nescafe, sucked on sweet Yudu county tangerines and fed on fat Xinfeng county oranges.

We have slept in separate double rooms in two air-conditioned hotels, one with all-day hot running water. We have ridden motorbikes without helmets around town in Xinfeng county town.

We have had opportunities in cities to chat with fashionable media folk -- mostly in Mandarin -- about our "feelings". We have held rambling conversations on our mobile phone with a few close friends back in Beijing. We have surfed two Internet cafes.

These comfy moments along the route remind us of life before the March. Let's state it plainly for the umpteenth time -- this is not a recreation, merely a retracing of the route.

But in that retracing, it's inevitable we encounter some of the same feelings the original Marchers had themselves.

I find that in a typical day on the New Long March, I occupy my vast intellect with one compelling and fascinating question: When will we get there?

Later, when we do indeed get there, and as Ed muses to me about the prospects of orange exports, Red Army battle tactics and local government planning, I find my brain has moved onto a second, more complex subject: What's for dinner?

Between these two thoughts, I have found little time to reflect upon the meaning of the New Long March, to bone up on Chinese characters or, indeed, to ask myself just why on earth we are doing this bloody stupid thing.

I find on their own -- or even in tandem -- these two thoughts occupy

New Long Marchers Make Headway



"Hello!" New Long Marchers Andrew McEwen and Ed Jocelyn get a youthful escort as they walk through Yudu, Jiangxi province.

99 percent of all available gigabytes in my memory space. I have long since deleted the "My Documents" folder of my mind and replaced it with "My Feet", "My Shoulders" and most importantly, "My Belly".

We have walked more than 250 kilometers across four counties of Jiangxi province. We have both gotten sick several days at a time. We have walked through almost constant rain over two

minor mountains, along winding rivers, through picturesque villages and down the litter-strewn streets of new, white-tiled towns. I have eaten food I would not touch in Beijing. I have foresworn liquor and I cannot find real coffee anywhere. Yesterday, not once, but five times, a long, loud truck burst potholes of dark water straight into my hooded face as I plodded uphill in driving rain along a major highway through Daiyu County.

Back in Yudu on October 16, as we set off on the greatest adventure of our lives, we had a chance to savor, in the unforgettable words of the late, great pop artist Andy Warhol, our "15 minutes of fame". We now have a further 529,905 to occupy ourselves with the price of that fame.

Maybe our New Long March, in the unforgettable words of a dead Carpenter, has "only just begun".

Photo by Liu Zheng

Banks Low Key on New Licences

By Zhao Hongyi

Six overseas banks obtained licenses from the People's Bank of China for individual business services in foreign currencies this week. The move represents a significant progress in the banks' local market access efforts. Most of the banks, however, prefer to remain low key on their success, and declined to give details as to where and when the services will be available to their customers.

CitiBank and Bank One from the US, Dresdner Bank of Germany, the Development Bank of Singapore, Nanyang Commercial Bank from Hong Kong and Raiffeisen Zentral Bank from Austria are the second group of overseas banks to obtain the licenses, after the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation won the privilege of being the first in Beijing earlier this year.

The banks will be free to open cash business services, including deposits and remittances, in US dollars, HK dollars, Japanese Yen and Euro. Account services cover sterling pounds, and Canadian, Australian and Singapore dollars, aside from the four major currencies mentioned above.

The People's Bank of China says, principally, cash deposit accounts are open without any preconditions, while fixed term deposit accounts require a minimum of US \$2,000 or equivalent amount in any other currency. The named banks are also now free to open services in Renminbi yuan, but to foreigners and customers from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan only.

However when Beijing Today contacted the banks' representative offices in Beijing, they all declined to give any further comment.

CitiBank opened a retailing outlet for

Renminbi business to local customers in Shanghai earlier this year, which at the time was headline news in the local media. But this time, the bank prefers to move slowly, saying they have not yet decided on opening an outlet for the business.

The Hong Kong-based Nanyang Commercial Bank has a large office on Chang'an Avenue, which provides services but "has no business." The reason, according to an employee of the bank, is "we are not allowed to post our commercials and posters outside our office. No one knows we have such services available."

The secretary of Dresdner Bank's chief representative in Beijing, who gave her name as Yang, made it clearer, "we won't open an account with one dollar or two dollars for each customer."

According to Yang, Dresdner Bank's office in Beijing, which also acts as the branch of

the bank in China, "It adds only a new type of business for us to operate. On the basis of services in foreign currencies we have operated, our customers know they can reach our office in the Sunflower Tower."

Analysts believe that many overseas banks have offered foreign currency services to customers, both local and abroad, in areas like trans-boarders remittance and deposit collecting from Chinese citizens living abroad.

"They have collected business so far as they can, particularly from those Chinese with large amounts of foreign currencies in hand," said Jia Wei, who works at a French bank in Beijing.

"The other customers are those potential ones, meaning they are still biding their time. Otherwise, the foreign banks won't target them, considering the costs," said Jia.

A Shares Open to Foreign Investors

Qualified foreign institutional investors (QFII) have been given the go-ahead to invest in China's A shares market beginning December 1, under regulations issued last Thursday.

The interim regulations on the administration of securities investments by QFIIs were issued jointly by the China Securities Regulatory Commission and the People's Bank of China.

Under the regulations, QFIIs will be able to invest in A shares, treasury and corporate bonds listed on China's Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges and other financial bodies approved by Chinese authorities starting from December 1.

The regulations say foreign firms should meet a number of conditions to receive QFII treatment, including requirements on credit standings, capital and management.

Two categories of shares are traded on China's two stock markets, in Shanghai and Shenzhen. At present, A shares are still reserved for domestic investors. Foreign investors can only buy B shares.

According to the regulations, foreign investors are required to set up a special Renminbi account with banks operating in China, which will act as custodians for their assets intended for securities investment, and use securities companies inside China in trading.

They also rule that each licensed foreign investor can only acquire up to 10 percent of the stocks in a listed company. Stocks held by more than one foreign investor cannot exceed 20 percent of total stocks of a listed company.

Foreign exchange quotas will be granted for the remittance of capital into and out of China. This is a transitional measure before the Renminbi becomes fully convertible.

(Xinhua)

Exhibition Replays Historic Handshake

By Zhao Pu

Thirty years later, the historic handshake between US President Richard Nixon and Chinese leaders in his 1972 visit to China will be replayed in an commemorative exhibit opening next week at the Museum of Chinese History.

The exhibition, Journeys to Peace and Cooperation, consists of over 200 important artifacts, including pictures, handwritten notes, clothing, gifts and government documents. Provided by both sides, the artifacts illustrate President Nixon's visit in 1972, the first diplomatic meeting between Chinese and US leaders since 1949.

Two films documenting the 1972 visit and the subsequent development of Sino-US diplomatic relations during the past 30 years will also be shown as part of the exhibition. Julie Nixon Eisenhower, Nixon's daughter, narrates one film that commemorates her father's historic visit to China.

Of particular interest is never-before-seen film footage shot during the trip provided by the Richard Nixon library and Birthplace Foundation in California. A private filmmaker accompanied Nixon on his trip and shot 18 hours of film, which has never been shown publicly, either in the US or in China.

Another highlight of the exhibition, provided by the Chinese Ministry of Culture and the Bureau of Cultural Relics, will be items used at the welcoming banquet for the President and First Lady, hosted by Premier Zhou Enlai. In addition, there will be a recreation of Chairman Mao's study in his residence at Zhongnanhai, where he met with President Nixon.

The exhibition will be staged in Beijing from November 20 till November 30, after which it will move to Shanghai from December 11 to 17. In January 2003, it will be presented at the Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation in Yorba Linda, California, Nixon's birthplace.



Rejuvenation for World's Oldest Irrigation Scheme

China on Wednesday began renovating the over 2,250-year-old Dujiangyan irrigation system in southwest China's Sichuan Province, at a cost of 30 million yuan (US \$3.6 million).

Water flow in the inner canal, the "heart" of the irrigation system, was successfully blocked at 10:50 am on Wednesday, forcing the current to turn and run into the system's outer canal.

The renovation project, due to be completed in 42 days, will

focus on dredging silt deposited in the inner canal, with the aim of letting the ancient water conservation scheme operate for another 2,000 years, said Peng Shuming, director of the Dujiangyan Administrative Bureau.

The Dujiangyan scheme, some 50 km from Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province, is said to be the world's oldest irrigation project still operating, supplying water to more than 670,000 hectares of farmland at present.

Built on the upper reaches of the Minjiang River, a major tributary of China's longest river, the Yangtze, Dujiangyan also provides water for daily and industrial use for people and enterprises in 50 big and medium-sized cities in Sichuan Province.

Dujiangyan was included on the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 2000.

(Xinhua)

The 2,250-year-old Dujiangyan irrigation system moments before the water flow was blocked Tuesday.

Dragon Tooth Returns Home

By Xiao Rong

Seventy-year-old Englishman James Alan Gilman returned a "dragon tooth" to Qingdao Aquarium Monday, and apologized for stealing one of the aquarium's treasures 65 years ago.

The dark brown tooth, which is actually believed to have come from a crocodile, was placed in a small round wooden box with the Chinese character "qian" (sorry) pasted on the inside of the lid.

As reported on page one of *Beijing Today* on August 23, in stealing the "dragon tooth," out of "childish lust after a trifling treasure," the then five-year-old Gilman almost cost his family their berth on the last boat out of Qingdao before the advancing Japanese invaders.

"What matters is not the tooth itself or whatever kind of creature it may have come from, what matters most is that I have taken something from others," Gilman told reporters.

Returning the tooth is, in his view, a symbol of saying sorry on behalf of his family to all those who were unable to escape from Qingdao as his family did.

The tooth will go on display in the aquarium in a specially made cabinet in December.



James Alan Gilman

Xinhua Photo

Two New English Proficiency Tests to be Introduced

By Shan Jinliang / Xinhua

Students of English will soon have the option of assessing their progress with two new English tests.

The Test of Professional English (TOPE), developed by the US-based Educational Test Service (ETS), will be given as a trial test on November 16 at the Beijing Foreign Studies University and the Beijing Language and Culture University.

One thousand applicants from colleges and universities, governmental administrations and multinational companies have registered to take the test. In addition, English training services and relevant institutions throughout the country are applying for franchise status in order to promote TOPE.

According to a spokesperson for Topeak, a Beijing-based company collaborating with ETS in promoting TOPE in China, the test is designed to assess the English proficiency of those whose mother tongue is not English. It includes

listening, speaking, reading and writing components, and employs vocabulary that is frequently used in business and daily life.

ETS will launch TOPE in China next year, in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Dalian and Chengdu, and then continue its expansion throughout the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world. The test will be held four or five times a year.

Meanwhile Chinese employees will be able to sit for an international occupational English test from next month, and use the certification as proof of their professional level for domestic and overseas recruitments.

The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), to be officially launched in Beijing and Shanghai on December 7, is a joint project between the Occupational Skill and Testing Authority (OSTA) of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and Sylvan Learning Systems of the US.

"This is the first time that

a Chinese government department authorized testing authority officially recognizes an overseas professional English standard applicable in China," said OSTA director Professor Chen Yu.

The OSTA will use the test to assess the English level of employees and issue its official English Proficiency Certificates for workplaces in China based on the TOEIC scores. TOEIC measures the reading and listening abilities of test takers.

Applications for the first round of testing are open from November 12 to November 30, and can be made online at www.toeicest.com.cn, after payment of a US \$75 registration fee. The first 1,000 need only pay \$45.

The TOEIC Test was developed by ETS in 1979 to assess the English exchange abilities of employees of multinationals and governmental organs, and it has been administered to more than 2.5 million people a year worldwide.

Top 500 Foreign-funded Enterprises Announced

By Shan Jinliang

The 2001-2002 top 500 foreign-funded enterprises in China in terms of sales volume were announced to the public last week by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC).

Motorola Electronics (Tianjin) Corp. retained its No. 1 position with an annual sales volume of 41.1 billion yuan, 9.8 billion yuan higher than last year. SAIC Volkswagen Sales Corp. jumps to No. 2 from No. 5 in 2001. But Shanghai Volkswagen Automobile Company falls to No. 3 from No. 2 last year.

The companies from No. 4 to No. 10 are as follows: Beijing Capitel-Nokia Mobile Corp., FAW-Volkswagen Corp., FAW-Volkswagen Sales Corp., Legend (Beijing), Huaneng Power International, Shanghai Siemens Mobile and Nanjing Ericsson (China).

Industry experts say three things can be concluded from the list. 1) Sales volumes have risen steadily. The sales volume of all the 500 companies reached a total of 1347.2 billion yuan, 19.8 percent more than last year. 2) The industries represented in the top 500 have become more diverse, including telecoms, electronics, petroleum and chemicals and retail. 3) Coastal regions are the area of choice for foreign capital. Guangdong has the largest number of listed foreign-funded companies, followed by Shanghai, Jiangsu, Beijing, Shandong and Liaoning.

This growth has been achieved despite the slump in the world economy. According to statistics from the ministry, China attracted US\$36.6 billion in investment from January to September, 22.75 percent up over the same period last year. This overseas capital and the advanced technologies and management experience that comes with it are the major reasons for the impressive progress of the Chinese economy.

Re-launched China Telecom IPO Warmly Received

China Telecom has received a flood of subscriptions in a Hong Kong public offer at its second attempt despite the poor performance of Telecom shares in the market.

Hong Kong's leading English newspaper *South China Morning Post* Tuesday quoted market sources as saying that more than 12,000 retail investors had sought about 1.3 billion shares when the offer closed Monday.

China Telecom, the dominant fixed-line carrier in the Chinese mainland, re-launched its global offering after cutting back its size by 55 percent following a weak response from international investors.

It reduced the number of shares for sale from 16.8 billion to 7.5 billion. The tranche allocated for Hong Kong investors accounts for 5 percent of the total global offering. The price will be set at 1.48 HK dollars (19 US cents) per share.

The re-launched IPO, however, found retail investors were demanding about 47 percent more shares than they wanted in the previous sale.

The international offering closed last Tuesday and was said to be about 1.25 times covered.

China Telecom shares will begin trading in New York Thursday and in Hong Kong Friday. (Xinhua)

Wu: Hot Stuff or Just Hot Air?

By Ema Ma

Rumors that Wu Shihong had been forced out of TCL intensified this week when the board announced her resignation. The board's claim that she was leaving because of medical reasons has done nothing to quell the speculation. TCL is one of the top state-owned appliance companies in China with annual turnover of around 20 billion yuan, but the fortunes of its IT business have been poor during Wu's leadership of the department.

It's a dramatic fall from grace for Wu, who was nicknamed the "white collar empress" following her exploits in China's IT industry. Once a nurse in a small hospital, she passed a self-taught higher education course and gained a degree in English. She entered IBM in 1985 as a member of the administrative staff. Wu grasped a precious opportunity to participate in a training program in sales one year later and accelerated up this career ladder to become Sales Director for Greater China, in which position she achieved outstanding sales figures. In 1998, Wu joined Microsoft and created another sales miracle: she accomplished 130 percent of the annual sales target within seven months. However, the time soon came for her to jump ship again.

Seventeen months later, Wu accepted TCL's offer to become Chief Director of the IT Department and Deputy Director of the company. Wu also published an autobiography, focusing mainly on her experiences in IBM and Microsoft, which became a best seller. Wu was named one of the most influential people in the IT industry by several publications.

In a terse public statement, TCL commented simply that Wu "had contributed enormously to TCL's development in the IT area." Exactly what she contributed remains a matter of conjecture, as do the reasons for her

departure.

The unsatisfactory recent performance of TCL is probably part of the story. The turnover of the IT Division in 2001 only accounted for 11 percent of that of the whole group. The HiD (Home information Display) on which Wu had pinned all her hopes was not a success. Also the much hyped multi-media platform "ejiajia.com" proved to be a money-burning machine, especially in the wake of the dot com collapse. The inadequate results achieved after enormous investment undermined Wu's dream of turning TCL into a globally competitive IT company.

Moreover, many are not surprised by this turn of events. Cynics point out that Wu's much-lauded marketing success had a lot to do with the fact that the market was far less competitive a few years ago. Also, a successful salesperson is not the same as an entrepreneur, who also requires market vision, management strategy and organizational skill.

It's also been suggested that Wu's principal skill lies in marketing herself. Undoubtedly, Wu is good at taking advantage of the media's curiosity. TCL needed her multi-company background and IT experience when diversifying into the IT industry but it also needed the publicity that appointing Wu generated. Indeed, it seems there are no losers in this affair. Wu added to her reputation and TCL marched into the IT industry on the back of considerable media interest. Taking advantage of "the VIP effect" is certainly more cost-effective than advertising.

Despite Wu's ejection from TCL, she's not likely to remain unemployed for long. The rumor is that she's been approached by San Xing Group already. The question now is how long the halo around Wu and her employers will last if there are no concrete achievements to back them up.



Wu Shihong

By Tony Shaw

Panasonic Electronics (China) has applied to restructure itself from a joint venture into a wholly owned company. If successful, Panasonic will become the first wholly owned foreign company in China's electronics industry.

It's just one of many foreign companies that are hoping to shrug off their joint-venture partners. Industry experts say the slackening control of the Chinese government and the different business models of Chinese

Panasonic China to Go It Alone

companies are persuading the foreign partners in joint ventures to run their business by themselves.

"The switch from joint venture to being wholly funded has to be approved by at least three departments," warned You Nan, an official of the PR Department of Panasonic, those being the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, the For-

eign Investment Administrative Bureau and the State Administration for Industry and Commerce. She said around half of the procedures have been finished, but no specific date for the completion of the switch has been given.

A report by *Beijing Morning Post* said two Chinese shareholders in Panasonic's China business, China Light Textile Investment

Corporation and China National Service Corporation for Chinese Personnel Working Abroad, have completed their share transactions. "Panasonic intends to improve its ability to control its China business and improve its profitability in China," said the report.

The first step for the wholly funded company will be to reorganize all its branches in China.

Established in 1994, Panasonic (China) was a joint venture with three Chinese partners. To date, it has set up 49 branches in China. But insiders say these separate units have their own interests and are run separately, with little inter-communication.

"This leads to waste of resources and low production efficiency," said a manager from Panasonic Wanbao Electronics in Guangzhou who requested anonymity. "And it prevents Panasonic from taking advantage of its size and power."

Panda Seeks Growth Spurt

By Shan Jinliang

The growing demand for multi-media mobile phones has pushed the newly established Microcell Panda Mobile Corp. to rush its first MMS phone, the GM100, onto the market this November, but analysts fear a hard road lies ahead for the industry newcomer.

Since October, China Mobile, the world's largest cellular operator with 110 million subscribers, has been promoting MMS (Multi-media Messaging Service), which can send words, photos and cartoons. Several mobile phone producers, mostly foreign-funded, think now is the time to start making a play for a share of this market. Panda Electronics Group, the parent company of Microcell Panda Mobile has taken the boldest step so far.

Panda established a joint venture on August 15 with Microcell, a well-known cell phone designer from Finland whose clients include Ericsson and Nokia. It intends to succeed where others have failed by offering decent quality, afford-

able MMS phones. The main reason sales of MMS phones have been poor so far is that they cost from 4,000-5,000 yuan and cheaper ones don't work at all well.

According to the plan made by Microcell and Panda, 70 percent of the new phones will be exported. This should not be a problem, according to Ma Zhiping, general manager of Panda Mobile. "Sixty-five percent of Panda phones are already exported," he said. The company says it expects to sell 10 million phones in the next three years.

It's a good thing Panda's exports are strong, as the Chinese market has so far appeared indifferent to its products. Industry analysts remain skeptical about Panda's ambitious plans.

The unit purchase of GPRS mobile phones by China Mobile on October 24 did not include any Panda phones. "China Mobile requires the highest standard of technology," said Jiang Hai, an analyst from Tianxiang Investment and Consultancy Corp.



Three pedestrians take a close look at a street-side ad pitching Nokia's MMS phone.

Photos provided by Photocom

"The fact they didn't buy any Panda phones means the market has yet to recognize its products." Jiang added when a new business is launched, unit purchase is often more important than individual sales.

Jiang also said the rising number of buyers of Asian-styled phones shows Chinese people favor this kind of style rather than that of Europe or the US. So it seems fancy European design by Microcell might not be quite such

a selling point domestically.

Furthermore, Jiang said, Panda's sales company is based in Jiangsu Province and the company has not built up a nationwide sales network to promote its national image and market share.

AOL Veteran Execs Leave AOL Time Warner

NEW YORK, Nov. 5 (Reuters) -Senior executives at media giant AOL Time Warner Inc. with roots in the America Online side of the company have left or soon plan to leave.

Executive vice president Mayo Stuntz quit recently, while executive vice president Kenneth Lerer said he intends to pursue a career in teaching. Senior vice president Marshall Cohen is also expected to depart.

All three were close to Robert Pittman, the company's former chief operating officer, who resigned in May and had once been in the running for the top job.

America Online, the division that was supposed to supercharge the rest of the business, has had the opposite effect. With slower subscriber growth

and a slump in advertising, AOL has offset strength in the film, publishing and cable networks businesses of Time-Warner.

(Reshma Kapadia)
AOL Time Warner's Credibility Gap

October 25, (BusinessWeek) - Would US Global Investors Fund Manager John Derrick invest in AOL Time Warner, the world's biggest media company? No way. "AOL is a soap opera. We don't own it," he said recently. "It's a mess."

Many investors clearly feel the same way. The media giant's reputation has been sullied by accounting investigations, management turmoil, unrealistic financial goals, and serious growth problems at Internet division America Online.

More than anything, AOL Time Warner needs to restore its credibility.

(David Shook)

Chinese Media Reports:

AOL Time Warner shareholders are preparing lawsuits against the media giant for AOL's false accounting and calculation of its "goodwill write down business", targeting several Wall Street accounting firms, such as Arthur Andersen, that served as accountants and consultants for AOL in its merger with Time Warner.

Reports say the accounting firms and investment banking companies that acted as consultants in the historic merger were awarded a huge total payment of \$120 million.

-China News Service

Suspicious about corporations' accounting performance first erupted with the Enron scandal, and became widespread following the unveiling of scandals involving Arthur Andersen, WorldCom, and now AOL Time Warner. The background for this growth of suspicion is the downturn of the US economy.

An economic growth is an urgent need in the US, both for the economy and the government.

On the other hand, to obtain a real growth and concrete profits, periods of economic slow-down that allow people to look back and check problems, are necessary. The US is going through such a period right now.

-Economic Herald Monthly
(Zhao Hongyi)



Capellas is shown with fellow HP executive Carly Fiorina, chairman and CEO, in Palo Alto, California, May 7, 2002.

Reuters Photo

HP's Capellas to Leave

NEW YORK, Nov. 11 (Reuters) - Hewlett-Packard Co. on Monday said Michael Capellas, its president and the former chief executive of Compaq Computer, will leave the company amid reports he could move to WorldCom, sending shares of HP down 11 percent.

HP said his departure will be effective as of December 1.

Investors and analysts said that Capellas' departure was not unexpected. Capellas has been promoted to CEO at Compaq in 1999 and had been welcomed by investors, who viewed him as a competent manager.

(Caroline Humer)

Soros Goes on Trial in France

PARIS, Nov. 7 (AP) - George Soros, American billionaire and the president of the New York-based Soros Fund Management, went on trial Thursday with two others for their alleged roles in a 14-year-old insider-trading case, one of the highest-profile financial scandals in France.

According to court documents, Soros is accused of profiting by \$2.2 million, but he declined all the charges. "I am sure that I will be exonerated," he said after the hearing.

(Verna von Derschau)

Greenspan: Economy Soft, Not Falling Down

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13 (Reuters) - Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said on Wednesday the US economy was weighed down by worry over possible war and falling stock prices but not by dangerous imbalances that tended to herald recession.

In testimony before Congress' Joint Economic Committee, Greenspan said last week's sharp interest rate cut should help the country through its "soft patch," adding that if the recovery unfolds as he expects, no more stimulus was needed.

Analysts said while Greenspan's prepared remarks echoed the tone of the statement issued after the Fed's November 6 meeting, his later comments struck a more optimistic note.



Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan testified before a Joint Congressional Economic Committee in Washington, on November 13.

Reuters Photo

Treasury Secretary Backs Tax Cuts

WASHINGTON, Nov. 14 (Reuters) - US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill on Wednesday backed the Bush Administration's plans to pursue continued tax cuts, and said he was preparing an array of economic stimulus options for the president to consider.

He said any US economic weakness was due to overcapacity in telecommunications and residual problems with the airlines, still coping with the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. He said strong housing starts were commensurate with the growth of families and did not reflect an unbalanced recovery.

S&P: Asia Pacific Insurance Industry to See Failures

London, Nov. 12 (the Asia Banker) - Company failures and withdrawals from the market will remain a feature of the Asia-Pacific insurance sector in 2003, Standard & Poor's Rating Services said at a press conference in London today.

"There are no safe havens anywhere in the region," said Ian Thompson, credit analyst and head of Standard & Poor's Asia-Pacific Ratings Group. "Even Australia, the most sophisticated market in the region, has seen significant failures, recently suffering near collapse as a reinsurance center."



In Sydney, a woman stops to check out the gold discounts at a jeweler. Australia is experiencing one of the most severe droughts in its history, which some analysts believe could lead to a recession of the country's economy.

Xinhua / AFP Photo

A Discouraging Sign

Will McDonald's Downsizing Plan Affect Its Sales In China?

OAK BROOK, Ill., Nov. 8 (Dow Jones Newswires) - McDonald's Corp. unveiled plans last Friday to close 175 under-performing restaurants and cut between 400 and 600 jobs world-wide in an effort to emphasize sales growth at existing restaurants.

The fast-food giant said it plans to restructure four international markets by transferring ownership to developmental licensees that will own McDonald's businesses, including real estate interests.

Roughly 200 to 250 of the 400 to 600 jobs McDonald's plans to eliminate are based in the US.

(Carolyn Gretton)

Analysts' Take:

Spokesman for McDonald's

Corporation (China)

The fast development of China's economy provides a good environment for the steady growth of McDonald's. We are confident about the future of McDonald's development in China. We will adhere to McDonald's operating concepts of maintaining high quality, first-rate service, cleanliness and value, and providing customers with special meal experiences.

Spokeswoman for Beijing McDonald's Food Corporation

McDonald's operates more than 500 restaurants in all in China, dispersed through approximately 70 cities. No restaurants in China will be closed in this action. Also, McDonald's plans to open 100 or so more restaurants in China in 2003.

(Hou Mingxin)



Two women pass by the sign of a McDonald's restaurant in Washington D.C.

Xinhua Photo

Citigroup Seen Cutting Jobs

NEW YORK, Oct. 25 (Reuters) - Citigroup Inc. plans to cut 1,000 jobs from its investment and corporate banking businesses, the New York Times reported on Friday.

The cuts will include more than 200 investment bankers, and will affect specialists in mergers and corporate finance.

Like other Wall Street firms battling the market downturn, Citigroup has seen a slump in capital markets-related businesses like advising on mergers and stock offerings. Rival J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. Inc. plans to cut another 2,200 investment banking jobs, in addition to previous layoffs.

Chinese Media Reports:

Since the end of last year, more than 60,000 jobs have been cut in the investment banking sector worldwide.

The September 11 terrorist attack drove a mass withdrawal of over \$30 billion that

month from the US stock market.

Accounting fraud scandals like those involving Enron, WorldCom and AOL Time-Warner drove crushed investors to withdraw over \$49 billion from the US stock market this July.

Recently-unveiled scandals about leading Wall Street banking companies such as Merrill Lynch and Goldman Sachs issuing misleading stock market analyses has further damaged investor confidence.

Supervisory agencies' focus on separating the investment, market research and analysis businesses in the sector will force companies to downsize and lay off more employees.

Andersen's accounts are false; WorldCom's CEO is rapacious; Merrill Lynch and Goldman Sachs' analyses are unbelievable; and Wall Street is trash.

-Beijing Business Today
(Zhao Hongyi)

Silicon Valley's Jobless Rate 7.9 Percent

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 9 (Reuters) - The technology downturn continues to hammer California's Silicon Valley, where the unemployment rate in October was 7.9 percent, the highest level since 1983 and well above last month's statewide average of 6.4 percent.

The recent levels reflect the fallout from sharply reduced demand for technology goods and services over the past two years that has led to scores of layoffs in Silicon Valley, where the jobless rate had been as low as 1.3 percent in December 2000.

Analysts' Take:

Huang Weiping, dean of the School of Economics, Renmin University

'Silicon Valley has collapsed,' said a few

friends of mine who have worked in the technology center and watched it go from boom to slump.

The bad performance of Silicon Valley is the result of the declining US economy, corporate scandals, and a failure to adapt to changing technology among the older elite of the IT world.

Though the future of the Silicon Valley is unclear, the technology center still has strong IT resources. But only if new revolutionary technologies are created in the Valley will it have a good future.

The impact on China's IT industry will be mainly positive. This is a good chance for China to attract IT resources from Silicon Valley.

(Shan Jinliang)

Attack of the Killer Wasps

By Chen Ying

A new weapon has been commissioned in the war against longhorn beetles, an annual campaign fought at Beijing's Ming-Dynasty Imperial Tombs.

In the past, countless gallons of insecticide constituted the front line in this take-no-prisoners battle, but after several years of small-scale testing, the new, six-legged foot soldier is ready for action.

Administrators of the Ming Tombs have ordered 2 million *Scleroderma Guani*, a type of parasitic wasp, from Beijing's Western Hills Experimental Forestry Center. The wasps are a natural enemy of the longhorn beetles that infest the cypress trees in the area of the tombs.

In fact wasps have been used against the beetles for the past five years, but never before in such a large quantity. The adult wasps are three to

four centimeters long and black. When released around the cypresses at the tombs, they will seek out the longhorn beetles, which they use as a host for their larvae. The larvae incubate in the body of the beetle, absorbing nutrients until the beetle dies.

"We used to have to spray pesticide several times a year to keep the longhorn beetles in check. But actually this has a detrimental effect on the trees' growth. And it also has a very bad

smell," says Li Junyi, who is in charge of the project. "Now we just need to release those wasps in the trees once a year. They do absolutely no harm to either the trees or environment."

According to Liang Hongzhu, a senior engineer at the Western Hills Experimental Forestry Center, the center has cultivated five kinds of parasites to deal with insect pests that damage cypress, poplar, willow and pine trees.



Photo by Cao Boyuan

Golden Season

By Chen Ying

Many people are suggesting that Beijing's autumn leaves should be

allowed to lie where they fall, arguing that walking through piles of golden leaves is one of the delights

of the season, according to *Beijing Youth Daily*.

Also, cleaning up those leaves is always a tough job for the public sanitation department. Street cleaners are kept so busy that they are not allowed to take holidays at this time of year.

However environmental experts maintain that leaving the leaves

where they lie is not appropriate in Beijing.

"Fallen leaves in Beijing do not decompose as readily as they do in cities in Europe because of the dry climate. The wind will blow the leaves everywhere. And they pose a fire risk," said Xu Jia, director of the scientific research office of the Beijing Bureau of Parks and Landscape.

Friendly Neighborhood Squirrel

By Chen Ying

People exercising in the morning in a wooded area near Jimen Bridge, Haidian District have enjoyed the company of a mascot called Huihui for the past two years.

Huihui is a squirrel. Locals are accustomed to him jumping in front of them and feeding from their hands every morning.

The rodent reportedly first appeared when locals were playing music during morning exercise two years ago.

It was happy to accept food when people offered biscuits or peanuts. Now everyone seems to have some tasty snack to offer, and Huihui is getting choosy.

"Stir-fried chestnut with sugar is his favorite," said one elderly woman.

Huihui seems to know that people do not want to hurt him, and he shows no fear of strangers.

Locals say that some people want to catch the lovable little beast. Someone once took a cage to trap him in, but was forced to retreat after the intervention of indignant animal lovers.



Locals have Huihui eating out of their hands. Photo by Qu Liyan

Lottery Scam Exposed

By Su Wei

Although he has never visited Spain or even purchased a lottery ticket, a Beijing man recently received a letter informing him he was the lucky winner of a Spanish lottery.

Mr. Chen, who refuses to disclose his full name, is the manager of an exotic fish farm in Chaoyang. He says he received a letter bearing the letterhead of El Gordo Spanish Sweepstake Lottery on October 4.

According to the letter, he was the lucky winner of US\$451,810, part of a cash prize totaling over \$16 million. "The letter said all I have to do is make a call to Spain and the money will soon be deposited into my bank account," says Chen, "But it advised me to keep my win quiet, because 'due to a mix up in names and numbers' my personal information should not be made public."

Chen was immediately suspicious about this apparent windfall. "I was certain from the start it would be a swindle," he says.

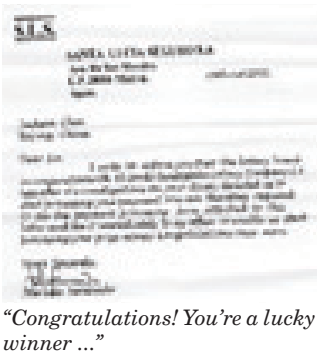
Through a simple search on the Internet, he found numerous warnings about the Spanish company posted on Scamwatch, a website providing information on various types of fraud, warning recipients of such letters to throw them away and not to respond.

Although his suspicions had been confirmed, Chen was curious as to how the fraud would play out, so he sent a letter back with his confirmation, "trying to find out their next action."

Within two weeks, a second and third letter had arrived, asking Chen to fill out a form for processing the payment. "Even at this stage, the Spanish company asked for no funds in advance of paying out the prize money," says Chen, "Every procedure seemed so formal."

Chen filled out the payment form and faxed it back. Within a week, he received a fax asking him to pay the cost of transfer and the outstanding insurance balance, amounting to US\$1,935 to enable them to transfer the prize money. "The devil cannot hide his cloven hoof," he declared excitedly.

Chen responded by sending a fax with all the information posted on Scamwatch. "The game is over. They do not dare bother me anymore!"



"Congratulations! You're a lucky winner ..."

Boys Own Festival

By Lily Li

Male students at Tsinghua University celebrated their very own festival Tuesday - the inaugural Boys Festival. "We take November 11, or 11/11, as a symbol of us as single boys," says Shang Yu, vice-chairman of the Tsinghua University Students Association, which sponsored the event.

Male students outnumber females by a ratio of five to one at Tsinghua, one of China's most prestigious universities. As Shang says, "There are so few girls here, fewer than half of my classmates have girlfriends!"

Activities organized for festival included female students helping boys decorate their dormitories, cocktail parties and lectures.

"We will be glad if the boys can learn more about life with our help," said Zhong Yan, a student in the Heat Energy Department.

Boys' Festival is followed by a Boys Week, during which male students will receive preferential treatment, such as free ice creams, free-use of university showering facilities, and half-price photo processing.

Girl Talk

By Lily Li

At an auditorium of Huaxia Girl's Middle School in Xuanwu District Tuesday morning, students listened attentively to a lecture on the female body, given by Lin Lefu, a renowned physiological expert.

The lecture is one of a series for female students in grade two of junior high, called the Young Girl Lessons, which Huaxia Middle School launched in September 1999.

"Not until studying these lessons have I really understood what adolescence is, and what self-importance, self-respect and self-love means for a female," wrote student Xu Xuanxuan in an article.

There are six lessons in the series, "Me and my body," "Me and my mentality," "Learning to get along with others," "Learning how to protect myself," "Understand venereal disease, love our lives," and "Love our lives, say no to drugs." Each lecture is given by a well-known expert in the field.

Tian Shirong, a senior psychology teacher at the school, says "the purpose of these lessons is to help young girls develop themselves more completely as they go through adolescence."

"The Young Girl Lessons", together with "The Successful Women," for female students of all ages, and "The Mentality Tutorship" for senior middle-school students, constitute a comprehensive series of lectures for students at the school.

"We want to create a 'modern women' culture on the campus as one of our school's key features," Tian says.

City Hospital Opens STD/AIDS Evening Clinic

By Shan Jinliang

Beijing Ditan Hospital has extended the hours of its sexually transmitted disease (STD) and AIDS clinic to 8 pm, in a move designed at providing greater privacy for patients.

The clinic, which previously closed at 4:30 pm on weekdays, is the first in Beijing to offer an evening service for STD and AIDS patients.

For many Chinese, STD and AIDS are regarded as something shameful for both patients and their families, and they would prefer to go without treatment rather than face the embarrassment of being seen attending such a clinic.

"Others cannot receive proper treatment as they have no time during the day," said Xu Keyi, a chief doctor at the clinic, "Our evening clinic caters to their needs."

Only two patients visited the clinic on the first evening it was open late and no more than five on the subsequent several evenings, possibly due to a lack of publicity about the extended opening hours.

Xu says four doctors and two specialists from outside the hospital are on duty Monday to Friday from 8 am to 4:30 pm, and two doctors are on duty from 4:30 pm to 8 pm. The clinic also opens from 8 am to 11:30 am on Saturdays.

The hospital has also launched a 24-hour STD/AIDS hotline (6422 6966 and 6421 1031 extension 2219), Xu added.

The city's first hospital to treat AIDS sufferers, Ditan Hospital established the Home of Red Ribbon in 1999, which offers HIV/AIDS counseling and support for family members, HIV Testing and HIV/AIDS medical care.



Photo by Song Xiaolin

Broadband Converters Damaged by Water

By Su Wei

Within one year, tens of broadband converters installed in Anzhen community in Chaoyang District have been damaged by water, causing losses totaling over 30,000 yuan.

"We never realized that the impact would be so big after *Beijing Times* first reported the damages on November 7," says Zhao Hongjian, vice manager of the operational department of Great Wall Broadband, the company that installed the units. "Similar things have occurred in other communities. It's just that they do not disclose the damage to the public."

Zhao said he was unable to show the damaged converters to *Beijing Today*, but "you can smell the burnt wiring and see traces of water in the plastic junction board when the converter box is open."

Zhao also said that a fire in one of the community's broadband junction boxes was caused by someone pouring water into it. "We can't say all the damages have been caused willfully," he said, "But we can identify if the box was damaged by water or not."

He added that some residents pour water onto the floor and stairs to clean them, and hang their washing in the corridors. "Water then gets into the converter boxes through pipes between the upper and lower floors."

Elderly Divorce

By Chen Ying

A married couple of 27 years filed for divorce recently at the Xicheng District People's Court. While this in itself is not so unusual, the case has been widely reported in local papers because of the reasons given by the couple for the divorce application, namely that the wife is unable, due to illness, to have sex.

Wang Lizeng, 52, always got along well with her husband Wang Xin, who is one year her senior. But due to an illness that has gradually caused her health to deteriorate over the years, she has become increasingly incapable of having sex.

Matters came to a head several months ago, when Wang Lizeng discovered her husband was having an affair with a young woman at his workplace. During the divorce hearing, the judge criticized Wang Xin, but suggested Wang Lizeng give him another chance.

Her words surprised everyone present. "It's all my fault. The love should be intact. He had such a change because I couldn't give him the love he needed. What I have decided is to give him a happy old age," she said.

According to the Xicheng District People's Court, the number of older people divorcing is on the rise. The court has accepted more than 2,100 divorce cases this year, about 30 percent of which involved elderly couples.

By Lily Li

Jilin province has come out of the cold to, as some see it, stand at the forefront of women's reproductive rights in China.

As of November 1, according to the first item of Rule 30 of the Bylaw on Population and Planned Parenthood passed by the Ninth Provincial People's Congress Standing Committee of Jilin, single women of proper age who vow they will never marry and do not have children are permitted to have a baby through artificial means.

"This law is aimed at protecting civilians' rights to bear children," said Zhang Manliang, section chief of the Administrative Law Department of the Jilin Provincial Government.

"Laws are not intended to restrict citizen's activities, but to defend their rights and freedoms under the essential prerequisite of not disrupting social order. According to all previous laws, unmarried women were not allowed to have children. That was unfair," he added.

In China, local governments can draft and pass their own regulations in keeping with their particular economic and social conditions. Jilin has emerged as the first province in China to pass legislation of this sort.

However, Zhao Bingli, vice director of the State Family Planning Commission says it's better not to make it an item of the law although single women do have reproductive rights. "This regulation is sure to bring about a lot of problems in the future as a local law," said Zhao.

Will this policy encourage women to have children before getting married, or without consideration of the consequences? Will single mothers be a significant social burden on society? Does this regulation conflict with traditional morality? Opinions follow:

Zhou Juan, 25, graduate student in school of journalism and communication at Beijing University

This law shows nothing but respect of women's rights to have children. Now more than ever, marriage is a choice, since women have become more independent in every aspect of their lives. Children should not be considered part of the whole marriage "package".

The new policy may open the door for people who want children but have no interest in marriage. However, I think, that may

Who Needs a Husband?

Northeast province gives OK to single moms

give rise to some serious social problems, and the law at least conflicts with traditional morals.

I also wonder if our society is ready to accept single moms. To properly implement this law, society needs to be more tolerant and understanding.

Chi Xiangrun, 38, Korean government employee

It is not easy for women to have children through artificial methods such as artificial insemination without being married, especially in eastern countries. Such women might be labeled as freaks, or even as crazy, by their neighbors and relatives.

But if a woman really wants to have a child on her own, she should do it. We have no right to judge her decision if it does not interfere with others' lives. In some sense, we have to take the reasons for her choice into consideration: such a woman may really love kids, or might need someone to be by her side for now and in the future.

So I think discussion of this

'Who should take responsibility of raising the child? Does the biological father have any responsibilities? Do children of single mothers have the duty of supporting their biological fathers when they grow old? Would these kids even have the basic right to know who their fathers are?'

topic should focus on the issue of individual freedom. I admit that there are possible moral hazards in having children artificially. But I think this moral question can be resolved through cooperation among people in society by considering the welfare of all individuals.

Meng Fanchao, professor in the Law Department of Northeast Normal University

This regulation conflicts with some existing laws and raises a series of questions.

If a single woman who decides to have a baby dies before the baby grows up, who should take responsibility of raising the child? Does the biological father have any responsibilities? Do children of single mothers have the duty of supporting their biological fathers when they grow old? Would these kids even have the basic right to know who their fathers are? I'm worried that this law could cause many problems in the future since it ignores chil-

dren's rights.

From the view of the spirit of law making, Jilin province's regulation is a kind of effort to give a more human touch to the law. But obviously, good wishes are not enough to make a complete and effective body of law.

The dilemmas posed by this regulation show this is a case of the law heading into dangerous territory.

Liu Lan, 77, retired worker from Haidian Street Office

I think this law only encourages girls to make rash decisions. For example, what about a young woman whose boyfriend has left her? She may prefer to be single and have a child for a while, but then she may want to get married — how will the law deal with that kind of a situation?

This policy is also irresponsible to children. Children that grow up in single parent families tend to be bad tempered and have trouble getting along well with others.

The consequences of this law are very serious — it could drive society into chaos. As far as I'm concerned, this law is not well grounded and not good for the next generation.

Ji Xiaofeng, 26, office clerk in the Hangtian Building

Allowing single women to have babies through medical methods is a great step forward in improving human rights. The world is changing rapidly and so are people's lifestyles. Nowadays more and more people are choosing to be single, and some of them want to have children. So, the Jilin government has enacted a good law.

However, in China, a comparatively old-fashioned society, single parents are still not accepted, to say nothing of artificial insemination of single women.

The Chinese traditional view is that both the mother and father are key in the children's development. Women can choose to be single for life, and this law can help them lead richer lives. But, does such a policy only consider these women and ignore their children's rights to grow up in a healthy way? This law may be immoral, to some extent.

With this in mind, there must be strict screening of women who want to be single mothers to determine if they are sufficiently responsible and able to raise children. If they can provide proper surroundings for kids, then this law is a good idea.

SOUND BITES

"It's a distinct lifestyle. They are mostly hedonists who value individuality and the quality of married life more than parenthood."

— Li Yinhe, sociologist who began research on "dink" ("double income, no kids") couples over ten years ago. These families now make up 12.4 percent of Shanghai's families, according to a survey conducted by the Shanghai Municipal Women's Federation

"For those who can afford it and many who cannot, a mobile phone is now a social necessity in China."

— John Gittings, East Asia editor of the UK newspaper *The Guardian*

"I would wait to see whether the letter's language is an indication that they are going to play games. ... I think the issue is not their acceptance, but performance on the ground."

— Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, regarding a letter from Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri saying that Iraq agreed to a tough UN resolution on weapons inspections Wednesday

"I think there's a message here. The message is, we better be looking closely now for more terrorist attacks."

— US Senator Richard Shelby regarding US counterterrorism officials' belief that a new audiotape attributed to Osama bin Laden is probably authentic, meaning the terrorist leader is still alive

By Chen Ying

See You in Court, Neighbor

Widely reported neighborly dispute reconciled, but similar cases on the rise

By Chen Ying

A retired couple that had filed a lawsuit against their neighbor of twelve years on the grounds they could no longer stand the bad smell emanating from the woman's room withdrew their suit in the Shijingshan District People's Court on November 7.

Beijing Today first reported the story on October 11. Zhang Wenqing, 70, and his wife had always got along well with their neighbor Pan Guilan, 75, who lives alone and was paralyzed in December last year. Since that time, she has not been able to take care of herself, and the sanitary conditions of her apartment have become poor.

Zhang said he sympathized with Pan, but had no other means of dealing with the problem than filing suit. He added that he originally wanted to sue Pan's three children, who he accused of negligence, but was disappointed to find there was no legal basis for doing so, leaving him no other course but to name Pan as the defendant.

Her children responded that the fact their mother was alive was proof enough they were not

negligent, and said the smell of her apartment was not as strong as Zhang claimed.

After ordering an investigation, the court decided the key to the case was in solving the problem of providing for Pan. After arbitration, Pan moved into her oldest daughter's home on October 27, after which Zhang admitted that the bad smell went away.

The number of lawsuits filed among neighbors with Beijing's lower courts has increased in recent years. The Haidian District People's Court investigated around 15 cases of neighborly disputes in the first half of this year, all of which were sparked by small matters such as problems with not taking out the trash or blocking shared passageways.

The media has a growing appetite for coverage of the growing number of lawsuits filed nationwide, while many people worry Chinese society is turning overly litigious. The questions seem to be, what are neighbors' rights, and how should disputes between neighbors be resolved? Is that proper territory for the law? Opinions follow:

Zhang Peng, judge for Zhang Wenqing's case, Shijingshan District People's Court

More and more people are trying to solve problems with their neighbors through legal means. In many cases, such problems can be solved by other administrations, such as local resident offices or local People's Reconciliation Committees, before they go to court. However, some people may still want their cases to be handled by the court because they want to know whether their rights have truly been protected. This reflects that public consciousness of the need to protect individual rights has improved.

For a while, people have tended to solve property disputes through legal means, but this case represents a new trend. In this case, it was hard to provide evidence proving the degree of stink, the key to the case. As far as I know, there still is no authoritative administration responsible for investigating such things. So it's urgent for the government to draft corresponding laws and set up a department able to professionally set

standards and conduct investigations.

Wang Penglin, lawyer, Yuanwang Law Firm

There is clear content about neighbors' rights in the PRC Civil General Rule, though it's just a general principle. Item 83 of the rule reads 'in order to facilitate living quality, citizens must deal with problems about property in a spirit of equality and rationality.' That means if one party really harms another, the offending party should stop their violation and offer compensation.

Another legal document, the Supreme People's Court Juridical Explanation, also includes some content about neighbors' rights.

Going to court should be a last resort. It's better if two parties in such a case solve their problems through mediation or negotiation. That is also more in keeping with traditional Chinese morals. After all, going to court will influence the relationship between neighbors.

With the development of society, people are concerned about not only their living conditions

but also their mental needs. In my mind, the question of rights between neighbors is mostly a psychological question. So it's natural there are more and more lawsuits about it.

Michael Primont, American

If you go to different cities in the US, people will have different styles and different ways of doing things. But generally, in big cities, if people are really angry about something, they will sue their neighbors. But you can't sue your neighbor for just anything. You have to sue your neighbor over something serious.

For instance, one of my friends owns a house in Seattle. A new person moved in next door and wanted to expand his house, so he changed the fence. He put the new fence close to my friend's house, so it made my friend's windows very dark.

My friend first talked to the man and said 'you made my house darker. Can you move the fence back a little?' The neighbor said 'No'. Then my friend said he would have to take the matter to court and the other man said 'OK'.

My friend spent a lot of money to hire an engineer to look at the problem. The engineer discovered that the fence was on my friends' property. So the court ordered the man to move the fence back and made him pay my friend to cover the fees for his lawyer and engineer.

It was a stupid little thing, but my friend had no choice. If it weren't for the court, where could he go? Not going to court would have only led to a fight.

This is not so important among people who have equal power. They can often find solutions without the court. But the court is really important when two parties don't have equal power. The court will look very clearly, rationally and logically at who is right and who is wrong.

When I first came to China, one of my colleagues told me that 'in America, big companies spend a big percentage of their revenue on hiring lawyers and legal matters. But in China, we spend a lot of money on restaurants. That's the way we solve our problems. And it's better for making friends.' It's a very nice solution, though it's not a good solution.

Mixed Marriages and the problems encountered

One year after his divorce, Chen Ming still wonders what went wrong with his marriage. "When I put the ring inherited from my mother, on her finger and kissed her, she told me that she believes it is because of the love between us that the world exists and she would be a good Chinese wife," says Chen, "No one can deny that we love each other, but..."

He refuses to say more about his short-lived marriage with Jane Lees, an English woman he met while at university. "Life is so strange. Marriage is so beautiful when you look inside through a window, but as soon as you enter, you find it is completely different from what you see," sighs Chen.



Mixed marriages in China

The total number of marriages between Chinese and foreigners has risen from just over 14,000 couples in 1982, to almost 24,000 in 1990, 51,000 in 1997 and almost 79,000 in 2001. In some large cities and coastal areas, the rate of increase in mixed marriages has slowed in the past few years:

The Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau registered 700 to 800 mixed marriages since 1997.

In Nanjing, the number of mixed marriages has fallen to 300 per year compared with over 400 in the early 1990s;

In Shantou, Guangdong Province, there were 135 mixed marriages registered last year, compared to 679 in 1991.

The percentage of Chinese men marrying foreign women is increasing in some large cities, with almost 10 percent coming from Shantou, according to a spokesman from the Beijing bureau.

By Su Wei

Over 20 couples in mixed marriages were divorced in Chaoyang District in the first half of this year, according to a staff member of the Marriage Registration Department of the Beijing Civil Affairs Bureau.

Language ability

Most of the Chinese women married to foreigners *Beijing Today* interviewed said they sometimes find it difficult to catch what their husbands say and express themselves clearly. They shared a sense of "being inhibited and isolated from life."

Xiao Wei divorced with her American husband, Charlie Bean, two years ago. She says sometimes her husband used slang to tease her, but she could not always catch his meaning.

"When friends came for weekly gatherings, I could only sit silently in a corner, trying to figure out what they were talking about." She says she was aware of the sarcasm of Bean's friends. "I felt so sorry for the embarrassment I caused on him, although he didn't say anything. The more frequently such things occurred, the more I sensed his becoming cold to me."

She says it was this coldness that led to their gradual estrangement. "I once thought as long as I love him and he loves me, we would live happily. Love is too complicated. It needs understanding, cooperation and everlasting preparation. All of these things rely on the ability to express yourself," says Xiao.

Loneliness

"I cannot say that he does not love me. When I tell my relatives in China I live in a two-story villa with three bathrooms and two gardens, they all think how happy I must be," writes Wang Ying, 29, in her email to *Beijing Today*. After marrying an English businessman, she moved to London. "But it is too large and too quiet here. I can not find any one to talk to besides the two Persian cats — Lisa and Richard."

Wang says her husband, whose name she never mentions in the email, is a workaholic. "I have to be used to him coming back at midnight." She says even on Fridays her husband may work till the early morning.

Living habits

Shen Jie says it would be unfair to say that she does not have a happy marriage, but "there is always something that I feel uncomfortable."

She says her husband, Wilson Wong, an American, does not like deep-fried food. "Each time when I fry chicken or fish, he always says 'I hope this will be the last time!' I can only say that I too have a healthy appetite."

Wang Juan, 28, is to marry a Korean man next week. She says her friends and parents tell her that marriage should not be seen as something that provides happiness, but as a target to pursue happiness.

Children's education

Wang Lili, 41, married a German engineer ten years ago, with whom she has had two children. For her, the biggest problem is to keep the children's Chinese identification. "I do not mean the physical appearance. I want them to maintain some sense of being a Chinese."

She says the children can understand Chinese but never use it, even when talking with her. "My husband says he wants them to be typical Germans, though he never opposes that I teach them some Chinese history."

Such concerns also exist in some marriages between Chinese and other Asian nationalities. Among half of the interviewed women with Japanese husbands concede that it is common for them to disagree or quarrel with their husbands about the children's education. "He opposes me to teach the child anything relating to China," and "He asks the child to stop study and help him manage the business," are the common complaints of these women.

Cultural differences

Many of the interviewed women complain that women have a lower social sta-

tus than men in some Asian countries. "(My husband) never gave a hand with the house work. I could not have an opinion about anything," says Jin, whose ex-husband is a South Korean government official.

She says she was not given any respect in the family, let alone treated equally. "Even when I was ill, I still had to get up early to prepare meals for the family and wash clothes for them."

Different value standards

One young woman who requested anonymity says she fails to understand why it is so easy for some foreigners to fall in love. She met her husband Rod Johnson on a train to Guilin and was shocked when he told her that he had fallen in love with her.

Won over by his persistence, she married him and moved to America. "One day when I went home, an American woman was taking a bath there." She says her husband made no explanation, saying simply that the woman was "a friend."

She feels puzzled by her husband's way of comforting her. "He says I should feel proud and happy that 'he is so charming to be loved by someone else.' He says it is natural to have a lover in America and I should feel lucky that he has only one."

Chen Ming's ex-wife, Jane Lees, sees nothing untoward in a married woman taking a walk or dancing with another man, something that Chen strongly opposes. "She said I was narrow-minded and lack an interest in life. She said it is her right to choose her way to enjoy life," says Chen, "Can any Chinese man feel it is natural and accept that their wife comes home late because she has been out with another man?"

Lacking understanding

An employee at the Marriage Registration Department in Beijing says one of her friends married a man from Middle East with "a big nose, blue eyes and curly hair." Less than six months later, however, she had divorced him.

The woman recalls her friend told her,

"Almost every night he asked me to have sex with him, sometimes three times a night! I had no choice but to leave him, for I do not want to die."

Ma Xiaonian, a lawyer with China Lawyers Group, says for many Chinese-born foreign citizens, despite their western education and acceptance of western ideas, the traditional Chinese concept of family still has a great impact. "Struggling in the narrow gap between the modern and the traditional, they form a distorted understanding towards marriage."

He explains some such men, especially those aged over 35, tend to expect obedience from their Chinese wives, and treat them as tools for giving birth, despite their claims that they are open-minded and respect the rights as human beings.

Tolerance is the key point

"The physical combination cannot overwhelm the spiritual combination. Differences between cultures, customs and values cannot be made up for by the sexual life," says Zhou Xiaozheng, a professor in the sociology department of Renmin University, "When people first fall in love, such differences are seldom considered as potential hindrances to a happy marriage."

He says when people are overwhelmed by the sexual desire, they neglect spending more time on developing a spiritual and psychological understanding with their partner.

Chen Yiyun, researcher at the Institute of Women's Studies of China's Academy of Social Sciences, points out that lack of communication is the cause of all problems in mixed marriages.

"An international mixed marriage is no different from that of a Beijinger with a Henanese. The only difference is that their hometowns are further away. Married couples should treat each other as best friends, not an attachment."

Beijing Today interviewed 14 Chinese who are or have been married to foreigners.

Photo provided by Tony Stone

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When “Employment” Abroad Turns Sour

By Ivy Zhang

It sounded like a new beginning: a career and a good salary in South Korea.

Instead, Zhao Honglong wound up being chewed up and spat out by one of the many con artists in China offering employment abroad.

To make things worse, after more than a year of going to and fro between Tianjin and Beijing, approaching the police and other authorities in an effort to seek justice, the case is still unsolved and the perpetrator has not been caught.

Roughly half a million Chinese people go abroad seeking employment every year and the number is rising.

The growing number of cases in which people have been conned finally persuaded the Government to take action this year.

The Management Regulations on Intermediary Agencies Providing Overseas Employment took effect on July 1st.

“Gold rush” dream turns into nightmare

Zhao Honglong, 44, is now unemployed and living with his 14-year-old son in an apartment owned by his brother Zhao Honghai in Hedong district, Tianjin. *Beijing Today* interviewed him last Sunday.

He was uncommunicative and kept smoking as he tried to recall the details of his case. Zhao used to have a home, a family and a business.

But after the case, he was forced to move out of his house. He could no longer afford the treatment for his wife's severe heart condition and eventually they divorced.

While his son studies at junior high school, Zhao tries to figure out ways to pay off his massive debts.

The nightmare started when Zhao saw an advertisement in a magazine named *Writers' Digest* on July 10, 2001.

In the ad, Huige Information Company based in Beijing offered consultancy services for people to obtain work permits in Japan, Britain, Canada and South Korea.

Zhao had been jobless for a long time at that point. He used to be a tailor designing and making clothes.

But the market gradually disappeared. “People prefer to buy ready-made clothes, even I would,” he says, with an air of resignation.

Without customers, Zhao was unable to keep his business going. But finding another job in Tianjin was difficult because of his age.

After seeing the ad, Zhao decided to try his luck abroad.

He called Wang Zhenhong, one of the owners of Beijing Huige Information Consulting Co., Ltd. and was told that if he paid a deposit of 38,000 yuan he could work for two years at a plastics factory in South Korea with accommodation provided and a monthly salary of at least 5,000 yuan.

If the job fell through before it started, Zhao would get his money refunded.

“It made sense to me. As long as I could make money, it would be okay,” Zhao said. “I had some friends who had gone to South Korea and made a good living there, working in restaurants or factories, so I thought I could do it as well.”

“I never cheat people, nor have I committed any crimes. I didn't realize there'd be so many sharks out there. Also, it was a company in Beijing. I never had any doubts about it,” Zhao continued.

Zhao borrowed 25,000 yuan from relatives and 20,000 yuan from friends using his house as a guarantee.

In the next three months, Zhao came to Beijing six times to meet Wang Zhenhong.

Zhao said Wang was “in his 40's. He wore glasses and looked like an intellectual.” Zhao agreed to the deal and



Photo by Lily Li

“I never cheat people, nor have I committed any crimes. I didn't realize there'd be so many sharks out there.

“Also, it was a company in Beijing. I never had any doubts about it,” Zhao Honglong said.

signed a contract.

On October 19 last year, after paying a total of 38,000 yuan to Wang, Zhao boarded a plane holding some forms filled out by Wang in Korean.

About two hours later, the plane landed in South Korea, though in which city Zhao had no idea because he knew nothing about the country. In the event it didn't matter, as he didn't even make it out of the airport.

“I was stopped by customs. The officers asked me where the forms came from and why I had come to South Korea. I said I came to work, that's all,” Zhao said.

He was then huddled into to a big room holding more than 50 people, Chinese and other nationalities, to stay overnight.

The next morning, Zhao was sent back to China.

Zhao immediately called Wang but was told to wait for an answer. “He said ‘don't worry. I guarantee I will get you back there within three days. Go back home and wait for my call.’”

Zhao waited and waited. But Wang disappeared half a month later. His phone number went dead so Zhao went to the office only to find that it had been closed. Zhao realized he had been duped and that his money was gone.

Meanwhile, Zhao's relationship with his wife got worse. They divorced in June this year.

Zhao felt desperate and hopeless. He said he attempted suicide twice. Once he took an overdose of pills and on another occasion he slashed his wrists. There are still signs of blood on the wall.

“So far, I have lost more than 50,000 yuan. I can't get my money back. I have no job. I have nothing,” said Zhao.

“Now my parents give me some money to live on. But as a man, I can't rely on my parents. I want to work. But it is really hard to find a job in Tianjin.”

A common problem

Zhao is not the only person to be cheated this way.

Late last month, Haidian police arrested a man who had cheated a number of chefs out of 110,000 yuan by claiming he could help them go to Cyprus to make big money.

According to Haidian Public Security Bureau, Zhang Yinlong, 26, worked as a chef after graduating from high school.

Zhang returned in December last year after working in Cyprus for two years. He printed a pile of invitation

letters headed with the name of a restaurant in Cyprus.

He then lobbied among friends and contacts, promising that if he received a 3,500 yuan deposit, he could find people work in Cyprus within one month. “You could earn US\$2,000 to US\$3,000 every month,” Zhang claimed, while boasting of his own success in Cyprus.

Soon, more than 30 chefs had approached Zhang and given him the deposit.

But three months later, they hadn't got their passports and Zhang was gone.

They went to Xisanqi police station in north west Beijing this April.

Zhang was caught on October 25. He admitted his offense and the case is still under investigation.

Such stories have become common. Many have made it to foreign countries only to find the worst kind of work, such as prostitution.

According to Fujian Daily dated on October 9, in the previous five months, more than 210 Chinese from Fujian Province had gone to East Timor holding traveler's passports.

“Most of them, believing the sweet words the middle-man told them, went over to make money,” the report reads.

“But in a country whose economy is in tatters, there are no job opportunities for foreigners.”

Regulate the illegal agencies

About 500,000 Chinese go abroad to work through legal means every year.

Though nobody knows the exact figure, “at least 500,000 more go abroad through illegal means, holding travelers or business visas,” said Lei Peng, Deputy Director General of the Center for International Exchanges, Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

Lei said the number of Chinese going abroad for employment had risen in recent years.

The destination areas have expanded from Japan and Southeast Asia to the Middle East, other areas in Asia and Latin America.

The majority of the people who use dodgy employment agencies to find work abroad are farmers and laid off workers.

“In some villages of Zhejiang province, half of the villagers have left to work overseas,” Lei said.

“As the education level of many of these people is rather low, it's easy for illegal intermediary agencies to deceive them with stories about the high salaries they can earn abroad.”

To cope with the situation, the new regulations define the qualifications needed by intermediary agencies.

All applications for a business license must be reviewed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

All such organizations must have professionals in law, foreign language and finance and a reserve of 500,000 yuan to cover unexpected expenses for overseas employees.

Fines ranging from 10,000 to 30,000 yuan will now be imposed on any companies found to have deceived their clients. There will also be criminal charges.

“The most important thing people should do to avoid being tricked is to check with the local labor bureau to see whether an organization is qualified to conduct this kind of intermediary business,” said Lei.

So far, there are only 58 authorized intermediary agencies for overseas employment in China, with just one in Beijing.

Asked why the number is so low, Lei said the new regulations were only implemented in July and local authorities across the nation are still interpreting them.

“The application documents must be reviewed by the Ministry before a license can be issued,” said Lei.

But, for now, no foreign organizations are allowed to engage in intermediary employment services.



Lleyton Hewitt beat Albert Costa by two sets to one Tuesday but lost to Carlos Moya in straight sets the next day. Xinhua Photos

Master's shootout

By Liang Yu / Ivy Zhang

Andre Agassi is hoping to snatch the title of World No. 1 from Lleyton Hewitt at the third Tennis Masters Cup which has just begun in Shanghai.

This is the biggest professional sporting event China has ever hosted.

The season-ending tournament will see the eight top ranked players in the world compete for the Masters Cup with its mighty US\$3.7 million payout for the winner.

The other members of the select eight are Marat Safin, Juan Carlos Ferrero, Carlos Moya, Roger Federer, Jiri Novak and Albert Costa.

Shanghai is not familiar territory for Lleyton Hewitt, but the spell of the 21-year-old has already begun to work here.

A gaggle of teenage girls gathered outside the Shanghai International Convention Centre, anxiously awaiting Hewitt's appearance after the opening ceremony of the Tennis Masters Cup.

“Go, Lleyton,” local fans yelled out in English, though their Chinese accents sounded a bit odd.

Such scenes are unusual here, as local residents' major pastimes are still dominated by table-tennis, tai chi and mahjong. Tennis is relatively new.

“I have never played in China and I haven't played a lot in Asia, so I was a little bit unsure how people were going to react,” said Hewitt.

“I think they really enjoyed the way that I play tennis, sort of wearing my heart on my sleeve out there and the way that I show emotion and get fired up when I win big points,” he said.

After his arrival in Shanghai, the reigning world champion was invited to a range of social activities, including coaching a tennis camp for local young people and launching a Special Olympics tennis program.



“It's not really a distraction,” said Hewitt, although he is aware of the challenge ahead. Despite Hewitt's 88-point lead over Andre Agassi before the trip to Shanghai, the 150 points offered for an unbeaten champion in the tournament may enable the 32-year-old from Nevada to unseat Hewitt for the No.1 spot.

“I think Andre knows what he's in for, he knows exactly how to play big matches. He's one of the best big match players I've seen in a very long time,” said Hewitt, who looked somewhat less than invincible after his stuttering 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 opening win over Spain's Albert Costa.

Indeed, he crashed to a straight sets defeat against Carlos Moya in his next year.

But as the youngest No.1 ever, Hewitt realizes a second Masters Cup title will set the benchmark for the new millennium and the new era.

“I've definitely got a couple of the two in-form players on the tour in my group, in Safin and Moya, but I feel like if I play my best tennis, I can beat anyone on any given day,” he said.

Although Hewitt admits he is still battling the virus that has plagued him for the past few months, good news from his girlfriend, Belgium's Kim Clijsters, may be a big boost as the latter defeated world No.1 Serena Williams 2-0 on Tuesday to capture the WTA Tour Championship.

“If I can get through the semis, anything can happen,” he said. “I feel like if I get through to the semifinals, I'll be hitting the ball well enough to maybe go in and win it, but then again there's a lot of things that can happen before then,” he added.

Backed by unprecedented support from Chinese fans, Hewitt seems on track for his second world No.1 title. “It would be a great way to finish a very long year.”



Which one of these guys looks most ridiculous? (from left to right) Andre Agassi, Albert Costa, Roger Federer, Juan Carlos Ferrero, Lleyton Hewitt, Thomas Johansson, Carlos Moya, Jiri Novak and Marat Safin.

In the past seven years, Gao Xing has searched every corner of the city with his daughter, discovering traces of cultural celebrities from times past.



Gao Shanliushui at Matteo Ricci's tomb at the age of four
Photo by Gao Xing

Happy Together

By Zhao Pu

Gao Shanliushui is an ordinary 10-year-old elementary school student. But two books about her have already been published, as well as a number of articles.

Originally, her doting father, Gao Xing, just wanted to record the details and scenes of her young life. "I just wanted to record my daughter's progress using my camera. There was no intention of publishing books or making it public," confessed Gao Xing. It was his editor friends who proposed turning his "daughter's archive" into books after seeing the dozens of albums he made in the past seven years.

Two books

What makes the book interesting is that instead of just being a sappy, sentimental collection of ordinary photos, it actually records changes in Beijing as well as in Gao Shanliushui. The first book, *Traces of Beijing's Cultural Celebrities—Discoveries with My Daughter* (京华名人踪迹录—与女儿一道寻访), was published at the end of last year. The book embodies 150 pictures taken in former residences of cultural and historical celebrities of Beijing, with accompanying stories about the places and their former owners. It is distinctly different from similar books or albums, with Gao Shanliushui's appearance in each of the photos.

Gao started to seek out the big names that once breathed life into the remaining old sections of the city with his daughter from 1995,



As an avid collector, Gao gathered over 100 teapots on his bookshelf.

when the little girl enrolled in kindergarten at the age of 3. "I simply wanted to show my little daughter around the old part of the city; the photos were taken to leave a memento for both my daughter and

those old houses. Many of those places will have gone by the time she's grown up."

The book covers five years as the little girl grows from age 3 to 8. In that time, the places in the book have disappeared one by one. "Nearly half of the places in this book have been dismantled," says the father. The little daughter can hardly understand why her father brought her to these old houses. Her explanation for their visits to these places is that "my father likes those old houses, he just enjoys being in the hutongs."

Poet daughter

Gao Shanliushui seems moderately impressed by the book. "It's quite interesting, my classmates like it too. But the photos are not that good; some of them are a little silly. And my friends say that I look ugly in those photos, not as pretty as I am now."

Apparently the little girl doesn't attach as much importance to the book as her father does. And the old houses in the pictures only matter to her father.



On the wall at Gao's home, there hang some tablets he took from dismantled hutongs.

In quite a few of the pictures in the book, the little daughter is busy eating snacks or ice cream, ignoring the environment around her. "She was always impatient to leave those old places so I had to buy her some candy to keep her happy," says her father.

It seems the experience has rubbed off on her, though. This year she went to an exhibition of old photos at Beihai Park with her father. She saw the old buildings and city walls in some of the pictures and asked her father, "Where are these old houses, have we been there?" Her father answered, "No, these old houses were torn down many years ago." "That's bad," she commented. Before they left, she saw a visitor's book and she left a bold message



Shichahai area is their favorite place to hang around.
Photos by Wang Wei

Gao Shanliushui's poems written at the age of four

Orchid

*The orchid flower is a little bowl,
Bees are busy having breakfast inside.*

Grassland

*Spring comes
Flowers blossom on grassland
Like washed toys*

Coke

*I love coke
Dad says I will drown in coke
I can drink up a coke river*



A hutong map of Qianmen area drawn by Gao Xing as a guide of their search.

on it: "Those who tore down the old houses are bastards!"

Their second book, *Daughter's Archive*, will come out by the end of this year. This time, it's not about old houses. It focuses more on Gao Shanliushui. Gao Xing has included things his daughter uses in her daily life. So in the archive he made for his daughter, there are not only photos and written illustrations, but also admission tickets to parks, clothes labels, medical prescriptions from when she was sick and her early paintings and poems. All these signs of the little girl's growth are presented in chronological order.

Gao Shanliushui didn't inherit her father's talent for painting but she is proving good with words. She began to write poems at the age of four. Some of her simple but inspiring poems have been published in children's publications.

One area in which she has already surpassed her father is in her strong sense of economics. During the interview, she raised a very important question with this reporter: "Are you paying us for this interview?" And she seriously stared at me for an answer. "No, I'm not paying. But I can treat you to a meal, is that ok?" "No." She rejected the bargain.

Two's company

Gao divorced his ex-wife after the birth of his daughter. He brought up the child alone. "Many people choose to maintain their unhappy marriage for the sake of their children, whereas I chose to divorce for the sake of my daughter," Gao reveals. He believed that for a little child, childhood happiness means safety, freedom and a tranquil life. "If the parents often quarrel, their child will suffer. In that case, it's better to divorce," he says.

"It's not really that easy for a single man to raise a child," Gao says. "But she always brings me happiness and fun which make me feel that I am the happiest father in the world."

He has done everything he can to provide his daughter with a happy childhood. "The love from a single parent is as good as the love from two as long as the quality is good enough," he says. In a way, he thinks that his daughter has been luckier than other children of her age. "She's been to lots of places,

and she has traveled with me by airplane...I always tried to let her experience more."

Gao is a big traveler. The pictures he took on tours around the country have been published by many travel magazines, so his camera is like a third eye for him. On top of this, Gao is an unparalleled collector. His 50-square-meter two-bedroom apartment is crammed with antiques and things he has collected from all over the country on his numerous trips.

"I have a kind of collecting-mania; that maybe to some extent explains my efforts in making an archive for my daughter," he says. Many others may find following the traces of a child's growth troublesome, but for Gao it's a very natural thing to do so. He regards it as entertaining and enjoyable enterprise rather than an obligation.

Many of Gao's friends asked him why he didn't teach his daughter to paint. Though Gao Shanliushui is not so good at painting, her father is not disappointed. "She herself is an interesting painting in my eyes," he says.



A Buddhist scripture from Tibet was a gift from a friend.

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Cathay Bookshop Celebrates Fiftieth Anniversary

By Iris Miao

Cathay Bookshop, China's first state-owned ancient and second-hand bookstore, celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this month. The shop, on east Liulichang Traditional Culture Street, is also China's largest bookstore specializing in thread bound books.

There have been countless books printed and handcrafted over the centuries in China, however stories of book burning are also astoundingly abundant in history. The earliest recorded large-scale destruction of books occurred during the Qin Dynasty (221-207 BC), when Emperor Qinshihuang ordered all the books in the entire country to be burnt. Six years later, a fire that blazed for three months reduced the newly printed imperial book collection to ashes.

In the modern history of China, with the arrival of the foreign invaders after the Opium War, there was an upsurge in the loss and damage of books. Many scholars involved in the book industry then took upon themselves the responsibility of preserving the classics of Chinese culture. It is largely thanks to them that so many rare editions, treasured private editions, and unique editions have been preserved.

Origins of the second-hand book trade

The book trade in China can be traced back some 2,000 years, to the late Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-24 AD) in Chang'an (now Xi'an). According to historic records from the fourth century, on the 1st and the 15th day of every lunar month, students would gather in an open area called *Huishi*. They took belongings such as Confucian classics, commentaries, biographies, or musical instruments to exchange with others.

Later in the early Eastern Han Dynasty (24-220 AD), specific shops for books were established in big cities such as Chang'an and Luoyang (Henan Province), frequented by people whose love of reading extended beyond the writings of Confucius and Mencius. **Beginning of the book trade in Beijing**

The first fixed book market appeared in Beijing during the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), near what is now East Chang'an avenue. Several book markets came into being with the development of the publishing industry during the Ming and Qing dynasties. In the mid 18th cen-



Photos by Zhuang Jian



tury, today's Liulichang area gradually became a book-trading center, with over 30 bookshops eventually gathered along the narrow hutong.

During the Republic of China (1912-1949), the number of bookshops at Liulichang reached over 100. Almost all the big names in literature, history, geography, philosophy of the past century has his or her connections with these bookshops. Lu Xun, the great writer of the 1930s, recorded in his diary that he had visited the street over 480 times.

Cathay Bookshop

On Nov 4, 1952, the state-owned Cathay Bookshop was established with just 13 staff. In 1958, the capital's 111 privately owned ancient and second-hand bookshops were merged into the Cathay Bookshop.

At that time, when the Chinese publishing industry was still small, a bookstore was more than a bookstore to students and scholars. "Most of my learning comes from

the Cathay Bookshop," says Qi Gong, professor and well-known scholar of Beijing Normal University.

He recalls those specialists who always knew which was a good edition, which was common, which was complete, which was an early print, and which was once banned. Normal business principles did not apply here, many book sellers would prefer to sell books to scholars for less profit, in order to make use of a book to its full potential.

During its fifty years operation, over 30,000 first, second and third grade rare ancient books have passed through the doors of Cathay Bookshop, many of which are now in various museums and libraries around the country.

Since 1992, the store has been holding regular auctions. The number of collectors of ancient books has grown tremendously in the past ten years, as more and more people begin to realize the value of the thread-bound ancient Chinese books.



Smoothing the page with a wet brush — the first stage in a book's restoration.

By Iris Miao

The advent of the market for ancient and second-hand books in China was accompanied by a growing demand for bookbinders and repairers. Those who engaged in these noble professions were praised as "doctors." Thanks to their skillful hands, thousands of years of Chinese cultural history could be passed down from generation to generation.

At Cathay Bookshop, there have been three generations of unsung specialists working behind the scenes since the opening of the store. Over 200,000 volumes of ancient books have passed through their careful hands, among them many exceptionally rare books, sometimes the only existing edition, the value of which cannot be calculated in terms of money alone.

"To repair ancient books, one needs to have the heart of a practicing Buddhist," says middle-aged Dong Shucheng, who has been in the business since the late 1980s.

Repairing ancient books is a traditional craft, an indispensable and effective measure to preserve the wisdom of the ancestors. A book printed hundreds or thousands of years ago might have been gnawed at by rats, partially eaten by worms, or damaged by water, fire or simply the passing of time. To restore a book to its original appearance usually requires ten to twenty different procedures, including finding the right type of paper, mending the holes, and repairing the mounting, backing, and binding.

Last year Cathay Bookshop took an order from Tsinghua University for the repair of thousands of volumes of ancient books that had once been kept in Chongqing, where they suffered extensive damage as a result of Japanese bombing during World War II.

Many volumes were partially burnt in fires caused by the bombing, then suffered water damage as locals fought to extinguish the

fires. The paper in such books became very brittle, breaking into pieces at the slightest touch. Other pages were completely stuck together, "They were like paper pancakes when we got them," says Dong Shucheng.

However, after nine months of painstaking work, over 1,200 volumes were successfully repaired, among which 180 volumes are rare editions.

"The job was loaded down with trivial details," says Dong, "but it gives us a strong sense of accomplishment when we finally finished the work, and the books turned out to have a new look."

Almost all the older sales staff at the Cathay Bookshop have some knowledge of repairing ancient books. But for the professionals, a well-done job entails maintaining strict standards. Every procedure has a set price; the repair of a 50-page volume could cost 30 to 300 yuan, depending on the extent of the damage and the rarity of the book.

In recent years, fewer and fewer young people have been attracted to the business, but as Dong says, not everyone who wants to go into the business is suited for the job. One needs a very good understanding of the trade in order to excel in it.

Dong says it is very hard for a layman to imagine how people like him can face looking at rotten paper year after year. He never feels depressed when he holds a volume of which the countless holes seem to account for a greater area than the part of the book that remains.

"That's what I mean about practicing Buddhism," he says.

When you bear in mind a profound understanding of traditional culture, when you take the job as a lifetime calling, rather than just a means of earning a living, "then you can sit down to carry out a repair, and finish the job to the highest standard."

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Role models

City Pictorial lists ten role models for generation Xers. People whose writing, songs, and films, or simply their personal lives, give the 70s generation an example of how to live or somehow defines their time.



Wang Shuo: Writer, credited with originating a Punk Literature. *Please Don't Call Me Human* is his best known work.



San Mao (Chen Ping): Late writer from Taiwan Province. Her most well-known work is an autobiographical novel *The story of Sahara*.



Lang Ping: Star of the Chinese women's volleyball team during its hey-day and the team coach from 1995 to 1998.



Chyi Chin: Pop singer from Taiwan Province, best known for his song *Wolf*.



Qiong Yao: Romance writer from Taiwan Province of over 50 novels, all of which have been adapted into movies or TV soaps.



Li Lianjie (Jet Li) Kung fu star actor currently making it big in Hollywood.



Zheng Yuanjie: Big children's literature name from the 70s and 80s. His most beloved book is *Pi Pi Lu and Lu Xi Xi*.



Jin Yong (Louis Cha) Martial arts fiction writer, whose total 15 classics are set in the legendary world of "Jiang Hu."



Cui Jian: The godfather of Chinese rock 'n' roll, who made his fame with the song *Nothing To My Name in the 80s*.



Zhou Xingchi (Steven Chow): Hong Kong comic actor and idol. Some of his lines from the movie *Chinese Odyssey* have become popular idioms.

By Yu Shanshan

Popular Guangzhou based magazine *City Pictorial* recently celebrated its third anniversary with a special "Born in the 70s" issue. The issue celebrates the achievements of China's generation X, and discusses some of the issues confronting them.

"We are finally at an age where the media is taking notice of us, our voices are being heard," says Li Hui, the 70s born vice editor-in-chief of *City Pictorial*. This is something of an understatement. The 70s generation has been providing the media with juicy headlines and controversial subject matter since the late 90s, particularly in the area of publishing.

A steady stream of "new generation" authors have been monopolizing the bestseller lists and bemusing the public with one controversial overnight sensation after another.

Zhou Weihui's 1999 *Shanghai Baby* remains a blueprint for many of these novels. Her semi-autobiographical outpouring about a waitress' drug-doomed relationship with her boyfriend and a married German man, with its explicit descriptions of the young woman's lesbian forays and frequent masturbation, won her hundreds of thousands of fans who hailed her for daring to say whatever she felt like and her utter disregard for traditional literary conventions.

Poets born during the 70s remain relatively underground, although a few have caught the eye of some mainstream magazines like *Poetry Collection* for "their strength when presenting their own voices and faces." *Poetry Collection* published works by ninety-four 70s generation poets in a special series spanning four issues in 2000.

As a result of this sort of attention, the first "Me Generation" in Chinese history has been

more and more under the microscope. As well as the popular *A Flying Group — Born in the 70s*, a compendium of fashion and culture edited by Tianjin People Publishing House, and Pang Xiaopei's *We were born in the 70s*, Hainan Publishing House published a collection of four academic books titled "197X," written by 70s-born intellectuals elaborating on their literary, economic and political thoughts.

The Internet too is treasure trove for those who cannot get their fill of generation X related news, analysis and chat. Websites like I70s.com and special column web pages such as can be found on Sina.com attract thousands of hits and the associated chat rooms are filled with heated debates and passionate diatribes.

Those born in the 70s are described as the "new generation," while those born in the late 70s are the "new new generation." These are Chinese born after the Cultural Revolution, the death of Chairman Mao and the arrest of the Gang of Four; kids who have no memories of a China before reform and opening up.

Stuck in the crack between the old and the new, children of the 70s grew up at a unique crossroads in Chinese history, where prosperity and technology meets culture and marketing.

On the one hand, they are adventurous, thirstily consuming new technology, not for the benefit of the community but for their own pleasure. On the other hand, this generation of Chinese youth is embracing a materialist society so rapidly that they sometimes might lose themselves in this fast-moving age.

However most commentators seem to have positive hopes for the 70s generation. "As far as I am concerned, this generation is bound to bring beautiful humanity in the cyber world to reality," says Huang Yihan, 44, a painter in the traditional Chinese style and initiator of "Cartoon Generation" artistic studio, a Guangdong studio established in 1992, which has developed into a nationwide arts group.

Childhood revisited

By Yu Shanshan

As the discussion about the 70s generation ebbs and flows, there is a concentration on certain snapshots, such as complaints from the parents' generation, who find it strange that these generation Xers seem reluctant to grow up, even after they have become self-sufficient.

An example of this is the current wave of nostalgia, once a preserve of people who had whole lives to look back on. At I70s.com there is a section named "Thorough Nostalgia," which collects 'top-ten's of snacks, books, games cartoons, TV series, ads, songs, movies school-days memories, and idioms — enough to provide material for a potential bestseller, possibly titled "Handbook of Childhood in 1970's." And the list is growing.

Another example is that some of them look like overgrown kids. A chapter in *A Flying Group — Born in the 70s*, published in 2001, puts it thus:

"Unfortunately,

everybody supposes he or she should appear younger. Thus the streets are crowded with women in their late twenties or early thirties in baby clothes, kiddy-style short hair, baby pink lipstick, and cutesy soft toys dangling from their backpacks and arranged around their office desks, some even go so far as to drink from babies' bottles. Meanwhile gentlemen call themselves 'boy' in ads seeking marriage partners."

"It's not just the looser social situation that permits the diversity they are brought up in," points out Long Yingtai, a popular writer from Taiwan Province, "it's also a result of the Chinese 'child-care style' education."

It appears that 70's kids have yet to find a way to get the message they truly advocate into their songs. So far most of them have not really done the job and there still seems to be a lot of work to do. The good news is that they like to work.

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加裕华装饰

By Wang Chunzhu

One year ago, renowned Japanese composer Danlkuma passed away during a visit to China. His strongest wish was to bring his opera *Chanchiki* to Chinese audiences and now his dream has come true with the Beijing premiere of the opera in Poly Theatre last Sunday.

Chanchiki is the name of a traditional Japanese musical instrument. Its sound symbolizes the power of life. The story of *Chanchiki* involves a male fox and his son who are looking for food in a remote mountain area. As winter is approaching, the father fox is eager to teach his son the skills he needs for survival. But the naughty son prefers to play, rather than learn something from his father. They have little to eat, so in order to catch some fish, the father fox tries to scoop some out of the icy water with his tail. Suddenly, his son is captured by hunters so the father drags his tail out of the ice hole but finds that it is already frozen and his tail is stuck. He breaks his tail in order to escape and rescues his son. In



Father and son in Chanchiki

the end, the father fox dies from his wound.

The basic story of *Chanchiki* comes from folklore, but its idea is universal: people always have feelings of anxiety or uncertain-

ty for younger generations, and they are ready to sacrifice everything for their children.

Danlkuma's score for *Chanchiki* involves a chorus of more than 60 people. The composer

had devoted great efforts to the development of Sino-Japanese cultural exchange activities, so this production is a fitting commemoration on the anniversary of his death.

An Orwellian Nightmare on Beijing Stage

By Jenny Wang

Animal Farm, the famous satire on the Russian Revolution by British novelist George Orwell, has been brought to the Beijing stage in a daring production starting in Yi Fu Theatre today.

The novel is told from the perspective of the animals on a farm who rebel against their brutal master and take over the farm. Inspired by an elderly pig, the animals set up their own "animal farm". However, after the death of this leader, some of the animals start manipulating and betraying the others in order to gain more power.

How to create the animal kingdom was the major headache for Director Shang Chengjun and his team. All the actors are required to wear costumes weighing about 20 kilograms. "We are trying to turn the audience's attention to the animal played by the actor instead of the actor's human face", says Shang, "and to achieve that each actor has to catch one particular feature of a certain animal."

Shang also introduces dance and music into the play. The unique combination of contemporary dance rhythm with traditional Chinese dancing skills matches the specially chosen background music. The backdrop is a painting by Francis Bacon, *Beautiful Countryside From A Telescope*, turned upside down. It contributes to the heady atmosphere of the wild joy, confusion, and disillusionment of revolution.



A scene from Animal Farm



Xu Ruyun

songs by other artists to perform, which were Xu's favorites when she was a student. "I used to sing them a lot and it was then I realized how much I enjoyed singing", Xu says. "Now I'd like to share them with all the people who support me so much."

Voice Is Everything

By Wang Chunzhu

Xu Ruyun is best known for her album *If Clouds Know*. A live concert last Saturday in Taipei kicked off the promotion of her new album *Clouds Clear Away*.

Xu's unique singing style has given her a unique position in the Chinese music scene. *Pray*, the first song on *Clouds clear away*, contains a 45-second vocal solo by Xu, without any background music. It is her special voice that highlights the whole album. Without any dazzling visual presentation of Xu herself, *Clouds Clear Away* puts the sole emphasis on her voice.

During the live concert, Xu also chose some old songs by other artists to perform, which were Xu's favorites when she was a student. "I used to sing them a lot and it was then I realized how much I enjoyed singing", Xu says. "Now I'd like to share them with all the people who support me so much."

Turn Left & Turn Right

By Wang Chunzhu

The popular cartoon story *Turn left & Turn right* by cartoonist Jimmy from Taiwan Province, China is being adapted for television.

Pop singer Lee Hom has been invited to debut in the TV series as the main character. Model Jed Lee, who came third in the "Asia's Most Handsome Man" Competition held in Japan, will also appear in the show.

As for who will act the role of the young woman, several female stars including Xu Jinglei and Yuan Quan are being considered. The shooting will be held in Shanghai with a budget of 6 million yuan for costumes and fashion design.



They finally meet in the park.

Turn left & Turn right tells the story of a young man and a young woman who happen to live in the same building but never meet each other. One has the habit of turning left when he leaves the apartment, and the other always turns right. One day, they drop in to the

same park and get to know each other. However, due to carelessness, they fail to keep in touch with each other after leaving the park, one turning left and the other turning right. Shall they meet again? The TV series will answer the question. The show will begin on Valentine's day next year.

WORLDWIDE



Actress Halle Berry

Halle Berry's 'Jinx' Headed for Bond Spin-Off

Oscar winner Halle Berry may be joining the exalted ranks of secret agent superheroes — becoming the star of the first movie ever spun off from the James Bond film series, one of the great money-makers in Hollywood history.

Fueled by a series of interviews, talk swirled around Hollywood that Berry, who plays the beautiful but dangerous U.S. agent Jinx in the latest Bond caper, *Die Another Day*, may be headed for her own spinoff movie.

Bond producer Barbara Broccoli and Berry herself confirmed to interviewers that the idea was being seriously considered. (Reuters)



Paul Burrell hugs his wife Maria.

Diana's Butler Speaks Out on Rape Tape

Paul Burrell, Princess Diana's former butler, stepped into the spotlight in New York and denied having a videotape about a gay rape claim at a British royal palace.

"It was they, not me or my family, who first mentioned in court a sensitive tape about a rape claim at a royal palace," he said. "The clear implication in court was that these items were in my possession. They never have been and never were." (Reuters)

Hollywood Studios Unveil Movie Website

Five top Hollywood studios opened online box office Movielink on Monday in their first, tentative step to sell block-

buster films like *Ocean's Eleven* on the Web after years of fretting over the copyright piracy now threatening the music business.

Movies on DVD have been a major contributor to studios profits since their launch five years ago, ringing up total sales of \$4.6 billion in 2001. Industry watchers believe Web-based video on demand can be even bigger. (Reuters)

Glover Receives Humanitarian Award

Actor Danny Glover has been given the Marian Anderson Award, which honors artists whose leadership benefits humanity.



Actor Danny Glover addresses guests.

Glover, who received the award and \$100,000 prize, was given the honor because of his work as an artist and a humanitarian who has fought for causes ranging from abolition of the death penalty to fighting AIDS.

Glover's film credits include *The Color Purple*, the *Lethal Weapon* series and *The Royal Tenenbaums*.

The award is named after Marian Anderson, the late opera singer and Philadelphia native who was the first black performer to sing at the White House. (AP)

Jennifer Lopez to Confirm Engagement

It's a go for J. Lo and Ben Affleck. The couple, who have been photographed kissing everywhere over the past few months, were recently engaged in a "traditional, but also in a very spectacular way," Lopez says.

Affleck, 30, has never been married. Lopez, 32, has had two previous marriages. She split from model-restaurateur Ojani Noa in 1998 after about a year and this summer ended a 10-month marriage to dancer Cris Judd. (AP)



Jennifer Lopez is engaged to Ben Affleck.

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Handicrafts with Rustic Roots

By Liang Hongling

In the hustle and bustle of the capital, it can be invigorating to find a place that offers a reminder of the quieter life of the countryside. Jing Tu Yi Fang, a small store that specializes in folk art from central China, is just such a place.

In the 1960's, Liang Daxing, the boss of the store, was sent to live and work in the countryside as a member of a production team like other school graduates. During his time in Shanxi province, he was greatly impressed with the local handicrafts popular in the countryside, impressed enough that he eventually opened a store.

The handmade goods on sale at Jing Tu Yi Fang hail from Shanxi and Shandong provinces. Most items come in animal shapes and are made of hand-woven cloth. Each has its own special meaning, such as the crane, a symbol of long life, and the bat, a sign of good luck.

One of the cutest and most unusual offerings is a frog-shaped pillow that bears pictures of the *wu du*, or five poisonous animals. These dangerous beasts are the snake, spider, scorpion, centipede and gecko. According to traditional Chinese ideas, this kind of pillow can offer protection from harm and evil.

A traditional choice for a wedding gift is a snake-rabbit, which comes from the old belief that among all the signs of the Chinese zodiac, the snake and rabbit are the best match. The animal motif is continued in clay sculptures, masks and hand-made shoes.

Other items include models of farm tools, such as mills, spinning wheels and ploughs, all made to scale, and pictures of door gods, which are rare nowadays. In the countryside, people used to hang such images of gods, most of which are famed ancient generals, on their front doors as talismans of safety and prosperity.

Where: Jing Tu Yi Fang (净土艺坊) No.28 Guozijian Dajie, Dongcheng District **Open:** 9 am - 6 pm **Tel:** 6401 1746



Cloth tiger, 60 yuan
Photos by Zhuang Jian



Small cloth donkey made by a 78-year-old woman, 100 yuan



Wooden roller and millstone, 40 yuan

Vicious Jaw and Pumpkin chairs



Photos by Li Shuzhuan

Slacking Off in Comfort

By Yu Yang

For a couple of years now, Black Jack Garden has been a comfortable, off-beat place to get a drink in the Workers' Stadium area, a good option for avoiding the monotony of Sanlitun bar street. The bar has recently added to its funky style by acting as a showroom for cutting-edge beanbag chairs.

These chairs are nothing like the childhood favorite. Slack brand beanbag furniture mixes style and function into combinations that cushion the back and do not break the bank.

Slack furniture is especially made for people who enjoy expressing their individuality. Technological improvements such as smaller beans and lower lumbar support make Slack beanbags more comfortable over longer periods of time than any beanbags ever, and most chairs, for that matter.

The beany seats come in a rainbow of colors, patterns and sizes and a range of fun styles.

The most striking is the "Vicious Jaw" series, priced at 1,199 yuan. These bizarre seats offer what is probably the most comfortable beanbag experience you will ever have in your life. Being "digested" in a Vicious Jaw seat is very much like being stuck in a Venus flytrap, only very comfortable. The chair's outrageous design is also functional, as its "tongue" is an ideal place to rest a laptop computer, book or game controller.

Pumpkin series chairs, which go for 599 yuan each, are shaped like their namesake. Although they are Slack's base model, they still offer the special) Sit and Wrap Zone with undeniable comfort. The playful size of Tallguy series chairs offer the flexibility to move from a regular seat to a recliner and places in between.

Where: north of Building 2 of Xingfuyicun, across from the north gate of Workers' Stadium, Chaoyang District **Open:** 6:30 pm - 2 am **Tel:** 6417 4628

All the Things Your Ducklings Need

By Salinda

Among the many purveyors of fashions in the Xijiekou area, one often overlooked is Piyo Piyo (Yellow Duck), perhaps because it is aimed at a niche market — babies. Plus, the store is located within the larger Jing Tian Shi Shang store.

However, the store is worth searching out for new parents, as it is a haven for babies and toddlers. The duck motif is carried throughout, from decorations to stuffed animals, even ones that can move and sing.

Besides duck toys, the shop carries a full range of baby goods, from bottles to clothes to quilts. Helpful salespeople are around to answer any questions from unsure new parents.

Items come separately or in sets, which are more economical. For example, a single bottle is priced at 35 yuan, while a whole set including the same bottle, a thermometer, comb and juicer (so babies can enjoy fresh juice) fetches 110 yuan.

Besides baby goods, there are some adult-oriented items on sale, such as cups, ashtrays, flowerpots and bags, all adorned with the yellow duck symbol.

Where: 2 tiao (alley), No. 5, Xijiekou Beidajie, Xicheng District **Open:** 9 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 6227 8769



A set of baby dinner service, about 110 yuan

What's your favorite shop, stand, bar or restaurant? We will be very happy to share your experience with all our readers and a mystery gift is waiting for you if you print your story. Please contact us at 6590-2522. E-mail: shopping@ynet.com.

Where Playdough Meets Art

By Salinda

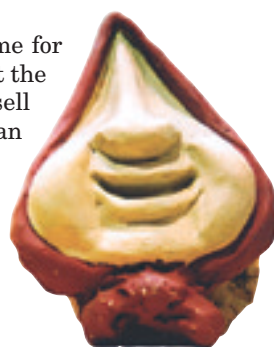
Sculpting with clay is no mere child's game for folk artist Liu Li. She is serious enough about the unusual art form that she set up a stand to sell clay toys on the Old Beijing street in Xindong'an Plaza after she retired three years ago.

The stand is called Bu Ju Ni, which literally translates to "free clay sculpture". Of course that does not mean the items are not for sale, but that her designs are not restrained.

Liu has never received formal art training, but she has not let that stop her, and has cranked out a new piece every day since opening her small store.

She offers a unique service of rendering comical portraits of customers in clay in just around 15 minutes. In these pieces, expressive human heads are grafted onto silly animal bodies.

Where: Bu Ju Ni (不拘泥), B1, A145, in Xindong'an Plaza, Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District **Open:** 9 am - 10 pm, **Tel:** 13611194412



Portrait of a miser, 35 yuan



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By Wenlong

Old weather only warms appetites for tongue-tingling fare such as hotpot, spicy crabs, *shuizhuyu*, or spicy stewed fish, and even snails. Little red-hot snails, called *fu shou luo*, are almost available at every Sichuan-style restaurant in the city.

The gastropods are generally quick-fried in a heady combination of pepper, ginger, garlic and Sichuan peppercorns, and served with a disposable plastic glove and a long toothpick to pick the hidden meat from the shell. Real enthusiasts, however, forgo the tools and suck the snails directly from their shells to savor the spicy liquid inside.

Spicy snails range in price in different restaurants, but generally start at around 28 yuan for a plate large enough to fill two empty stomachs.



It's Hip to Be Spicy – Fushou Snails

The Cheapest

— Meizhou Dongpo Restaurant

This restaurant, through its name, claims relations with Su Dongpo, the famous Song Dynasty poet who also created his own dishes that eventually formed a branch of Sichuan cuisine. Meizhou Dongpo is one of the city's major dining success stories, expanding from one restaurant in 1996 to five today in different areas of the capital.

The restaurants offer Beijing's cheapest spicy snails, dubbed *pen pen luo*, at a mere 18 yuan. Other Dongpo series dishes all fetch reasonable prices, such as braised pork (*dongpo rou*) at 29 yuan and braised elbow (*dongpo*

zhouzi) at 25 yuan.

Add: No.1 Tuanjieshu Dongli, Chaoyang District **Open:** 10am–10pm **Tel:** 8598 8912 **Average cost:** 40 yuan per person

The First

— Feiteng Yuxiang Restaurant

This large Sichuan-style restaurant is best known for its *shuizhuyu*. Mr. Liu, public manager of the restaurant, also claims his restaurant is responsible for introducing spicy snails in Beijing.

Here the snails are a bit pricier, at 38 yuan per plate. The price of its famed fish depends on type, with catfish and snakehead going for 48 yuan per 500 grams and grass carp for 32 per 500 grams.

Add: No.17 Zhichun Lu, Haidian District **Open:** 11:10am–2:20pm; 4:30pm–10:20pm **Tel:** 8231 1286 **Average cost:** 50 yuan per person

The Hottest

— Yuxin Chuancai Restaurant

This new Sichuan-style restaurant has drawn enough attention that branches are popping up all over. The decoration of all Yuxin restaurants revolve around bamboo. Spicy snails go for 28 yuan, and other Sichuan specials are similarly reasonably priced. *Shuizhuyu* fetches 30 yuan per 500 grams, hairy crabs (*maoxie wang*) 25 yuan and stewed mutton (*tubo yangrou*) 38 yuan.

Add: No.5A Xingfuyicun Xili,

Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District **Open:** 11am–10pm **Tel:** 6415 8168 **Average cost:** 40 yuan per person

The Local

— Jinyupen Shuizhuyu Restaurant

This is a Sichuan specialist like all the restaurants above, but it stands apart with especially fiery snails, which go for 38 yuan. A popular dish of quick-fried Chinese cabbage (*qiangchao baicai*) is priced at only eight yuan, while the *shuizhuyu* costs 38 yuan.

Add: No.2A, Xingfucun Zhonglu, Chaoyang District **Open:** 11am–2pm; 5pm–11:30pm **Tel:** 6415 8099 **Average cost:** 35 yuan per person



Yuxin Chuancai Restaurant



Feiteng Yuxiang Restaurant



Meizhou Dongpo Restaurant

By Wenlong

Lemony Herbed Codfish (*ningmeng yinxueyu*)

Ingredients: two tablespoons butter, half a lemon, half cup unseasoned bread crumbs, one tablespoon grated lemon rind, one tablespoon rosemary and one pound codfish fillets.

Procedure: Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place butter in the center of a rimmed dish or dinner plate. Squeeze the juice of the half lemon onto the butter. Place dish in the microwave on high for 30 seconds or until butter melts. While butter is melting, pour bread crumbs onto a plate. Grate the lemon rind and sprinkle 1 tablespoon of rind over bread crumbs. Sprinkle rosemary over both. Stir to mix. Pat fish

Cooking at Home - Codfish

fillets to remove excess moisture. One fillet at a time, drag fish through butter mixture to coat, then drag through bread crumbs. Place into an oven-safe casserole large enough to hold fillets in a single layer. Repeat until all fillets are buttered and breaded. Bake for 8-10 minutes or until fish flakes easily and is lightly browned.

Stewed Codfish with Rice Wine (*zuixiang yinxueyu*)

Ingredients: eight pieces of codfish, bean starch noodles (*fensi*), sliced carrots, fish broth (made from rice wine, shrimp and dace bones), oil, chopped ci-



lantro, sliced ginger

Procedure: Quick fry codfish until golden colored, then pour the fish broth into the pot. Add the noodles, sliced carrots, cilantro, sliced ginger and rice wine. Stew until all ingredients are cooked.

Salad of Cod with Orange Slices (*shalu yinxueyu*)

Ingredients: 500 grams of codfish, two oranges, five grams of ginger juice, 60 grams of salad dressing, two grams of pepper powder, two grams of powdered cheese, five grams of lemon juice, one fresh lemon

Procedure: Clean and skin the cod. Cut into thick slices seven centimeters long, three centimeters wide and 0.3 centimeters thick, then marinate in a mixture of salt, pepper, ginger wine, and powdered cheese. Heat oil in pan to 170 degrees and fry the fish slices in the oil until fully done. Arrange orange slices as a decorative border around the fish, and serve with salad dressing and fresh lemon juice.

By Joel

The alleys behind Sanlitun's bar street are not exactly off the beaten track, but are often ignored as a place to get a good bite and do have a lot to offer. One restaurant trying to squeeze into the scene is Xunfu Waguan.

Opened in September after taking over the space of a former Jiangxi-style eatery, the unassuming restaurant has expanded the specialties to foods from



That's one big soup pot

Photos by Zhuang Jian

Great Soup, Middlin' Fare

Hunan and Hubei provinces as well. In general, the fare is tasty and the prices are quite reasonable, but in both atmosphere and cuisine, it's nothing to write home about.

The signature dish of the restaurant shares its name (*xunfu wagan*, 58 yuan). It's a delicious soup made of strips of meaty fish, mushrooms, ham and dates in a milky, chicken broth. The fish is the best part, as it is firmer and less bony than most. The soup is an excellent way to warm up cold bones, and served in a bowl large enough to make sure four diners get plenty of refills. Similar soups featuring spare ribs or chicken are on offer for lower prices.

The other standout was a dish of bamboo shoot, (*jinggangshan laobiao sun*, 26 yuan). Thin strips of bamboo shoots are stir-fried with smoked tofu and pork in a rich brown sauce that is a bit smoky and spicy, and very delicious, especially on rice.

The disappointment of the evening was a signature dish, *cong kao Wuchang yu* (26 yuan).

Two fish were cut flat, covered with sesame seeds, laid on a bed of leeks over a bamboo lattice and then roasted. What should have been delicious was not. The fish was bony and overly soft and somehow oily. More troubling, it was very lightly flavored, especially compared to the same dish at other Hubei restaurants in the city that often spice it to the point it tastes

almost Mexican.

So, if poking around the non-descript watering holes along Bar Street one evening, Xunfu Waguan might be a good place to warm up on hot soup. But can it hold its own against its established, popular neighbor, Lao Hanzhi, a wildly successful Hakka restaurant? Not yet.

Add: No.1A North Building, Sanlitun Beijie, Chaoyang District **Open:** 11am–11:30pm **Tel:** 6413 2241 **Average cost:** 50 to 60 yuan per person

Food Cure

Pearl Powder



By Wenlong

Don't worry, this curative is not as expensive as it might sound. Pearl powder, or *zhenzhufen* or *lianzhufen* in Chinese, is made from natural and cultivated pearls, but it does not come at a huge price, and is effective at solving some health problems associated with the fall and early winter. It has a very light sweet and salty taste, and is considered a cold element in Chinese medicine.

Basic pearls are odorless and tasteless, and crack when burnt. They can then be pounded into pieces and made into a fine powder through repeated grinding in water.

Treatments: Calming the mind and arresting convul-

sions. Pearl powder can be used to treat epilepsy and acute febrile infantile convulsions. Some people take a mixture of pearl powder and honey to treat restlessness and panic.

Improving vision and treating eyes. This traditional curative can treat conjunctivitis and pain in the eyes. To these purposes, it can be taken orally, or applied in the form of eye drops.

Removing toxic substances and promoting digestion. Pearl powder is an effective treatment for ulcers.

This fine powder is also helpful for smaller ailments, as a bit blown into the back of the mouth can soothe dryness and pain in the throat.

Italian Winemaking Star Hits Town

By Wenlong

Michele Chiarlo, a genuine Italian wine maker, arrived at Grand Hyatt Beijing on November 8 carrying some of his best known wines. His vineyard hosted a reception on the ground hall of the Hyatt that evening to introduce its range of wines, Barolo Cerequio, Babera D'Asti and Rovertto Gavi.

Through sips of his products, Chiarlo offered those in attendance information on how to judge wine quality and how to find the right wine to match any dish.

Chiarlo's home is in the Piedmont region of Italy, famed worldwide as a wine grape growing paradise. Chiarlo owns three wineries in the heart of Piedmont's growing areas of Calamandrana, Gavi, Rovertto and Barolo.

The Barolo Cerequio 1997 is Chiarlo's signature wine. Deep garnet with brilliant highlights and fine fluidity, the Barolo's taste suggests black currant, apricot, cherry, mint and gentian and is best matched with robust red meat and mild game dishes and is excellent with aged cheese. Chef Giorgio of the Grand Hyatt cooked pigeon filled with goose liver and served with caramelized leek to accompany the Barolo wine.

The Rovertto Gavi white wine shines pale straw with green highlights. "I like Gavi. It tastes of vanilla, chocolate, anise and fresh hay," said Michele Chiarlo. "When I eat seafood or hors d'oeuvres I must have one glass of Gavi on my table."

Another of his favorites is the award-winning Babera D'Asti, Chiarlo's first wine, which remains his greatest passion. The wine, ruby with purple highlights, is suggestive of wild



berries and mint and should be consumed when roughly one-year-old. "Dishes based on meat, poultry and medium-bodied cheeses are excellent matches for this wine," said Chiarlo. At the Hyatt event, chef Giorgio created mushroom lasagna with sauteed romaine lettuce and parmesan cheese sauce to match the Gavi and Babera D'Asti.

Born to a family with a five-generation tradition of grape-growing, Michele Chiarlo started his career in 1956 with a diploma in oenology and a great love for wine. There is no secret behind his successful rise from a small winery owner to a prestigious wine maker except the pure natural conditions of his vineyards and his mastery of the wine-making process.

Though their creator left on November 9, Chiarlo's wines remained the star at Giorgio, the Grand Hyatt's Italian restaurant, for anyone who missed the event of the day before, with chef Giorgio's delicious culinary matches for the wines still on offer.

Add: Second floor, Grand Hyatt Beijing, Beijing Oriental Plaza, No.1 East Chang'an Avenue **Open:** 11am–2:30pm; 6:30pm–10pm **Tel:** 85181234 ext. 3628 **Average cost:** 100 yuan and up per person



Michele Chiarlo, left

Photo by Wang Xiaoxi

By Wenlong

To many Chinese, the name of the 'Penglai Xianjing' teahouse immediately conjures images of Penglai Island off the Shandong Peninsula, believed to be a fairyland inhabited by immortals. However, the clever name can also be understood to mean "welcome a friend with tea".

The teahouse, a two-story building that sits on the north Third Ring Road near the International Exhibition Center, stands out with its simple but elegant lines and cozy feel. The owner, Mr. Liu, stands behind the name of his joint, claiming, "everything in the teahouse is customer-oriented".

Penglai Xianjing is divided into four separate rooms with about 30 open seats,

A Modern Fairyland



and is designed and decorated to look like the wooden houses made by the Dai people of Yunnan Province. The building has central heating, keeping it nice and toasty in the winter, and the relaxing, fresh atmosphere is bolstered by soft piped-in music and a no-smoking policy.

There is a wide variety of teas available, ranging in price from 50 yuan to 800 yuan for 50 grams. The teahouse also offers snacks for an average price of 15 yuan. Considering its decoration, quality and location, this little oasis is a tea-drinking bargain.

Add: No.3 Section, No.34 Guangximen Beili, Xibahe, Chaoyang District **Open:** 10:30am–1:30am **Tel:** 6448 1803 **Average cost:** 50 yuan per person



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Where: the Loft, Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** November 15, 8 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 6466 9296, 6501 7501



A little pain A bright tomorrow

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Its time for China Charity Greeting Cards for Christmas, New Year and Chinese Spring Festival. By sending a China Charity Greeting Card to your family and friends, you not only send a greeting for the new year, but a personal contribution to charitable work in China, giving hope to disadvantaged children nationwide.

Where: China Charity Federation—China Charity Greeting Cards Sales Office **Tel:** 8455 2670 **Fax:** 8455 2659

WAB Wine Fair

Participants in the WAB Wine Fair, a fun wine event to raise funds for charity, can try samples from more than 80 wines from around the world and get involved in fun wine experiments.

Where: Western Academy of Beijing, Atrium Dining Court, 10 Laiguangying Donglu, Chaoyang **When:** November 16, 3–8 pm **Admission:** 150 yuan **Tel:** 13801328640 **Fax:** 8046 5367

Activities

Swiss Culture Week

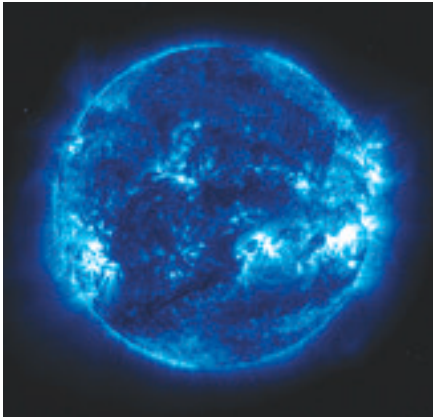
Swiss culture week—the feeling of Switzerland will take over Renmin University. Exhibitions, lectures, concerts and movies will represent Swiss history, culture, education and Sino-Swiss relations.

Where: Renmin University, 39 Zhongguancun, Haidian **When:** November 18–22 **Tel:** 6532 2736 ext 312/310 **Email:** carol.yin@bei.rep.admin.ch&daniel.zehnder@bei.rep.admin.ch

Russian Club One-Year Anniversary

The first grand celebration of the Russian-speaking community of Beijing will be held in the Novotel with the participation of the CIS embassies. Black tie, ballroom dress, national costume required for the event, which will include a buffet, concert program and lucky draw. Everyone is invited.

Where: Novotel Banquet Hall, 3 Jinyu Hutong Wangfujing **When:** November 22, 7:30 pm, reservations must be made before November 15 **Admission:** adults 165 yuan, students 150 yuan, including buffet, beer and lucky draw **Tel:** 13021021024, 13520268759 **Website:** www.russianbeijing.com



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Seminar and Reception

Lehman, Lee & Xu, American Law Firm Association [ALFA] member for China, cordially invites you to attend the ALFA International–Asia Pacific Group Seminar and Reception. The topic of the seminar is business mergers and acquisitions. Both the seminar and the reception are completely free of charge, but attendees are asked to dress in business attire.

Where: Chang'an Club and Grand Hotel Beijing, 10 East Chang'an Avenue **When:** November 21, 1:30 pm–5:30 pm and 6:30–9 pm **Email:** ALFA@lehmanlaw.com.cn

Civilian Kiln Exploring Trip to Cizhou Kiln in Hebei

See the process of porcelain making at this active ancient kiln that dates back to the Song Dynasty. Depart at 9 am, November 16, from the Kempinski Hotel lobby, return at 4 pm, November 17. Local special-

ists will be the guides.

Where: Kempinski Hotel lobby **When:** November 16–17, Saturday–Sunday **Tel:** 8451 8767, 8451 0306



How to make tea

The History of Tea

China was the world's first nation to plant, make and drink tea. Tea experts will explain the history of tea, how it is made, and how it is grown.

Where: Lee's Antique Carpets, Liaomaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** November 16, 2–4:30 pm **Admission:** adults 50 yuan, students 40 yuan **Tel:** 8851 4913 **Email:** Beijing@chinesecultureclub.org.

Music

Beijing Symphony

Under the baton of Tan Lihua, the Beijing Symphony Orchestra will play Beethoven's "Violin Concerto in D Major."

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall **When:** November 16, 7:30 pm **Tel:** 6559 8285

Italian Jazz

The Pago Libre band is truly international, with Arkady Shilkloper from Russia, John Wolf Brennan from Ireland, Daniele Patumi from Italy and Tscho Theissing from Austria, all who have extensive classical training. Performances will include their own pieces, a wide variety of classical, jazz, ballads, pop and experimental music as well as on-the-spot improvisation.

Where: Italian Cultural Institute **When:** November 18, 7 pm **Tel:** 6532 2187

Where: Renmin University, 59 Zhongguancun Street, Haidian **When:** November 19, 7 pm **Admission:** free

Where: International Art Saloon, Crown Plaza, 48 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** November 20, 7 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 6471 4480

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall **When:** November 21, 7:30 pm **Tel:** 6559 8285



Pago Libre

Stage

Animal Farm

A stage adaptation of the famous satirical English novel "Animal Farm" will be put on by Chinese actors from the China Drama Academy for the first time. A group of pigs that live on a farm in England are not satisfied with their human master and decide to establish their own government. But the government they set up is even more oppressive than the one they revolt against.

Where: Yifu Theatre, 39 Dongmianhua Hutong **When:** November 15, 7:15

pm **Tel:** 800-810-3721, 6404 1498

Arlecchino

Arlecchino is the most famous character from the great Italian tradition of the "mask" of Commedia dell'Arte, which is based on improvisation and expressive use of gesture and words. Arlecchino has a cat-like mask and a costume of multicolored patches. He is always hungry and funny, plays jokes, and is ingenious, natural, witty and impudent. The play has traveled all over the world as a poetic message of peace and friendship.

Where: Century Theatre **When:** November 21 and 22, 7:30 pm **Tel:** 6532 2187 **Email:** italcult@public.bta.net.cn

Exhibitions



Art to cheer winter blues

Winter Exhibition

As winter approaches, but one exhibition is catching on like fire in the Qin Gallery. Jiang Tianyu's oil paintings feature a deep affection for love. Lingzi's work is close to nature, expressing a simple but vigorous spirit. Li Yan's work is full of humor and irony, with insights into modern society.

Where: Qin Gallery, Hua Wei Li Enjoy Paradise 1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City) Chaoyang **When:** November 15–30 **Tel:** 8779 0461, 8779 0458 **Email:** qingallery@yahoo.com

Dialogue on the Watchtower

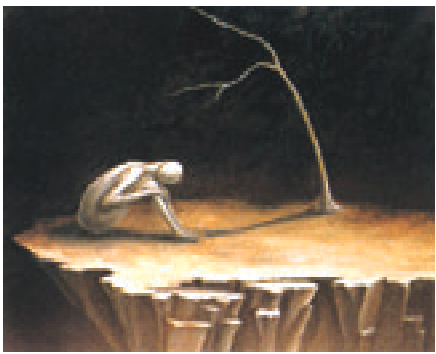
Red Gate's acclaimed participation in the Melbourne and Singapore Art Fairs in October is reviewed with a presentation of works by Huang Yan, Wang Qiang, Zheng Xuewu, Wang Yuping and Australian's Tony Scott and Guan Wei.

Where: The Dongbianmen Watchtower, Chongwenmen **When:** November 16–December 1, 10 am–5 pm Tuesday–Sunday **Tel:** 6525 1005 **Email:** redgate@eastnet.com.cn **Website:** www.china.redgategallery.com

Travel Photography

Photographer Joaquim De Castro shows the results of his endless travels following in the footsteps of Portuguese voyagers, merchants, sailors, soldiers and laymen across Asia. The freelance journalist writes for various publications in Macao and Portugal, mixing his work and personal pursuit under a travel theme.

Where: Portuguese Cultural Center **When:** November 18–30, 4 pm **Tel:** 6532 4795



Self-portrait in Scenery by Lin Zhuxuan

Painting from Korea

Twenty-three paintings from both established artists and graduate students from a Korean art institute. All the works reflect the mainstream and developments in Korean art.

The artists will be on-hand to talk with viewers.

Where: Wangfeng Art Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie Dongcheng **When:** November 13–19, 9 am–5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6528 9103 **Email:** newartcenter@163.com **Website:** www.newartcenter.com.cn

An Abstract Ink and Wash Painting Exhibition

Zhong Ruqian, member of the Chinese Artists Association, has created his own art concept based on the communion of traditional Chinese literature, painting and western art. Circuses, magic and popular entertainment are sources of inspiration in his works.

Where: Creation Gallery, Ritan Donglu, Chaoyang **When:** November 15–24, 10 am–7 pm **Tel:** 8561 7570 **Email:** keeg.cn@sina.com

Copies from the Historical Archives Exhibition

An exhibition of collectible reproductions of paintings and calligraphy certain to appreciate value, all coming from the First Historical Archives of China. Only 100 sets of reproductions, containing 88 works each, have been published.

Where: Sixth floor of Xindong'an Plaza, East Chang'an Avenue and Wangfujing, Dongcheng **When:** till November 20 **Tel:** 8511 9900

Performance



Scene from Fire Bird

Ballet from South Africa

The Cape Town City Ballet from South Africa will present Stravinsky's Fire Bird in Beijing. The Fire Bird, commissioned for a ballet troupe under Sergei Diaghilev, premiered in Paris in 1910, making Stravinsky an overnight sensation, and is one of the most popular and influential ballets ever staged.

Where: Beizhan Theatre, Xizhimenwai Dajie **When:** November 15, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 60–480 yuan **Tel:** 6561 0658

Dark Tales

At the invitation of the China International Culture Exchange Center, Theatre O will perform the award-winning English stage play *Three Dark Tales* in Beijing. Three Dark Tales is a play with a fantastic soundtrack, Keaton-esque slapstick, big dance numbers and humor. The three tales are Dream on Mr. Tibble, The Unfortunate Predicament of Amelia Sas and Frank's Wardrobe.

Where: the Beijing People's Art Mini Theater **When:** November 21–24, 7:15 pm, November 23, 2:15 pm **Admission:** 80 yuan **Tel:** 64203473

Movies



The Bourne Identity

The Bourne Identity

Based on the Robert Ludlum novel, the story starts with a bullet-ridden man (Matt Damon) being washed ashore, unable to remember who he is. In order to recover his identity, Damon stays on the run against forces tracking him through Europe. The film proceeds at a cracking pace so that any inconsistencies fade into a blur.

Where: local cinemas **When:** November 21

The Lovers

This is a romantic, delicate and endearing adaptation of the famed Butterfly Lovers story, the Chinese Romeo and Juliet. Charlie Young stars as a female student who goes to school dressed as a boy and falls tragically in love with a gifted but destitute schoolmate. Forced by her family to marry into a wealthy family, the doomed couple kill themselves and turn into two butterflies that stay together forever. In Chinese with English subtitles.

Where: Dongchuang Theatre **When:** November 21, 8:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6416 9253

Lecture

For Expats Without the Package

A senior doctor from Beijing International SOS is joined by a guest speaker from Waterstreet Asia (WSA) to discuss how to choose medical insurance.

Where: International SOS Clinic, BITIC Building C, Xingfu Sancun, Chaoyang **When:** November 21, 6:30–7:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6462 0555

Teas and Tea Ceremony

A tea expert elaborates on the history, planting and processing of tea in China. Four categories of tea, including green, oolong and jasmine, will be introduced, touching the color and shape of the leaves, and taste and texture of the drinks. Participants will have a chance to try four brands of each kind of tea. The tea ceremony will also be demonstrated and explained.

Where: Jia Zu Tea House, No.2 Nanwanzi, Nanheyuan Street, east of Wangfujing **When:** November 16, 2–4:30 pm **Admission:** adults 50 yuan, students 40 yuan **Tel:** 6514 0901

Learn to Make Jiaozi and Sing Chinese Folk Songs

Learn to pull dough into thin noodles in three minutes, and wrap dumplings with vegetable and meat contents. Everybody will have a chance to practice. Then enjoy melodies from Yunnan,

Mogolia, Xinjiang and Tibet. Words to songs provided in English, Chinese and pinyin so everyone can chime in, under the direction of a teacher from the China Central Conservatory.

Where: Lee's Antique Carpets **When:** November 17, 2–4 pm and 5–7 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan for adults, 30 yuan for students **Tel:** 8851 4913

Parties

Jazz Night

Jazz sextet Toono ("sky window" in Mongolian) is back at Sanwei Bookstore, improvising modern and traditional tunes. Browse the Sanwei's eclectic selection of books before the show and between sets.

Where: 60 Fuxingmennei Dajie, opposite the Minority Cultural Palace **When:** November 15 and 22, 8:30–11:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6601 3204

Punk Night

Bands from Japan and Beijing gather to present a punk night. Hardcore punk band A.S.K. and One Shott Skullmenz from Japan, joined by Chinese bands like Reflector, Ouch, Misandao, Kill Tomorrow, Another Idea, Joy Side Recycle and Doll

Where: Get Lucky, 500 meters east of south gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** November 15, 9 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109, 6420 4249

Power Metal

Junxie Suo have lots of experience playing live, having frequented Beijing stages since their founding in 1995. It's all about power metal, fast and angry.

Where: CD Café, south of the Agricultural Exhibition Center, Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** November 23, 9:30 pm **Tel:** 6501 8877 ext 3032

GLAY

A night of new stars and crazy clothes - the Japanese band GLAY will get the girls screaming.

Where: What Bar, south of University of International Business and Economics **When:** November 16, 9 pm **Tel:** 13910209249



Drimmer Zixuan will play with GLAY

For Rent

CBD area, 140sqm, walking distance to the subway. Two bedrooms, two bathrooms, two sitting rooms. Clean, nice conditions, fully furnished with appliances. Contact 13901208035 (no middleman)

Sports

Learn Basic First Aid

Hosted by the Hong Kong International Medical Clinic, an open seminar will teach CPR and basic emergency treatment

Where: Beijing Yewchung International School, 5 Houbali Zhuang, north of the east gate of Honglingjin Park, Chaoyang **When:** November 20, 9–11 am **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8583 3731 ext 25



Getting some fresh air

Walk Like a Pilgrim

Miaofengshan temple sits on the top of Miaofengshan Mountain, and is a very important religious site. Our walk starts from a temple at the base of the mountain and goes to the center trail; it is well paved all the way. You will see ancient trails, forests, wonderful views, and high mountain scenery. Travel time is two hours from the Lido Hotel, with a walking time of four hours. Start at 8:30 am at the Starbucks at the Lido Hotel, return at 5:00 pm.

Where: Mentougou, west of Beijing **When:** November 17 **Admission:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701003694 **Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk

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By Guo Yuanfan

The Drum and Bell Towers



The Bell Tower: this used to be the world's biggest alarm clock.

By Jerry Ho / Chen Jie

Finding high places in and around Beijing to see the view is a popular activity and perhaps the best-known place for this is the Fragrant Hills (Xiangshan). But another ideal location for a bit of city viewing that's a lot closer to home is often overlooked. The Drum and Bell Towers, located near Houhai, offer panoramic views of probably the most charming part of Beijing.

To the south of the Drum Tower is Shicha Lake. Wanchun Pavilion in Jingshan Park and the White Pagoda in Beihai Park are both clearly visible. Hutongs spread in every direction around the tower, exuding the tranquility and peacefulness that is typical of old Beijing.

Drum and bell towers were built in many Chinese cities. Built in 1420 during the Ming Dynasty, the Drum and Bell Tower complex (called Zhong Gu Lou) is the biggest and oldest of its kind in China. As part of the royal architecture of the ancient capital, it sits at the north end of the longitudinal axis in the middle of Beijing. Directly to the south are Jingshan, the Forbidden City, Tian An Men, Qian Men and Yong Ding Men.

The Drum Tower is built from wood, and is 47.9 meters high. It was built on a 3 meter base made of stones and bricks. On the second floor there used to be 25 drums, one big drum and 24 smaller ones. Now only the big drum remains. It is 2.22 meters high with a diameter of 1.4 meters and the surface is made from a single piece of cow skin.

On the second floor of the Bell Tower, a big bronze bell hangs from an octagonal wooden frame. Two round logs, both two meters long, used to sound the bell are suspended on each side. At 5.3 meters tall, and weighing 63 metric tons, it is the heaviest bell in China. It was made in a bell foundry behind the tower with a kind of bronze that was particularly resonant. When struck, the sound can reach several miles away.

This was important as the towers used to act as a kind of

giant alarm clock. Through the three dynasties of Yuan, Ming and Qing, the working and resting hours of all civilian people and government officers used to be set by the sound from the towers.

Sounding of the bell and the drum was set in a regular pattern. The bell was struck twice a day, at 7 pm and 5 am. The drum took over at night, every two hours from seven o'clock in the evening till five o'clock at dawn. Each time, the drum was struck 108 times.

Striking of the drum and bell was performed by guards of honor dispatched from the royal palace. When Pu Yi, the last emperor, was expelled from the Forbidden City in 1924, the guards of honor were also dismissed and the towers' function came to an end. Now the bell is only struck on the last day of Chinese New Year. The drum is only struck as a performance for tourists (this service is available from 9 in the morning until 5 in the afternoon).

Near the towers there are several other places worth visiting. Among the many alleys to the west of the Bell Tower is one called Zhu Zhong Chang Hutong (the bell foundry alley), where the great bell in the tower was made. According to local people, there is a story behind the making of the bell. The master founder had some difficulties in finishing the job. So in order to help him, his daughter threw herself into the melting pot to give the human spirit that the great bell needed. People built a temple in honor of the young girl. The temple still remains but the main hall was demolished two years ago. The story is still popular in the neighborhood.

The Dou Fu Chi Hutong (Bean curd alley) next to the Drum Tower is another famous alley in Beijing. At the west end, there is a vegetable market with an arch carved in the shape of flowers. This used to be a temple of an imperial concubine. A small yard in the middle of the alley is well known as the former residence of Yang Kaihui's father. Yang was Mao Zedong's first wife. Mao himself used to live here



The Drum Tower

too. To the east end of the alley there is a group of buildings that belonged to a member of the royal family in the Qing dynasty. Now it has become an office of the Municipal Public Security Bureau of Beijing.

You can also walk all the way through Yandai Xiejie (Tobacco Pipe Street) past Yindian Qiao (the Sycee Bridge) into the Shicha Hai lake area to enjoy the lakeside scenes.

Houmen Qiao (Backdoor Bridge) is well-known for the small shops there, selling

clothes that are cheap but still quite fashionable.

There is convenient public transportation to the tower area. Buses No. 5, 107 and City Express 104 and 815 all have a stop (Gu Lou) near the towers.

The Drum and Bell Towers are open to the public from nine in the morning till five in the afternoon.

Admission to the Drum Tower costs 20 yuan for adults and 10 yuan for students. For the Bell Tower it costs 10 yuan for adults and 5 yuan for students.



The former temple of an imperial concubine



The former residence of Chairman Mao at Dou Fu Chi Hutong



Ordinary streets wind past the Drum and Bell Towers.

Photos by Lin Hui